



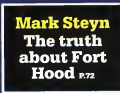
CLAUDE LEMIEUX
AN INTERVIEW WITH
FIGURE SKATING'S
UNLIKELY HERO P.16



**SHAMING
RUDE
PEOPLE**
P.71



**THE END
OF THE
PILL?**
P.50



Mark Steyn
The truth
about Fort
Hood P.72



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TWENTY YEARS after the Soviets left Afghanistan, Canada confronted the consequences of abandoning the country to extremists.

THIS WEEK

Editorial

16 | CLAUDE LEBIEUX
 Charlie Gills talks to the graceful ex-M66, player
 about battle of the blades

Columns

12 | PAUL WELLS
 Innocent geography is easily
 tainted by evil history

14 | ANDREW POTTER
 Devlin redemptive for life in
 the bad old days of the GDR

15 | CAPITAL QUARTER
 Michel Ruffalo on why MPs
 might need full monties

16 | DONALD
18 | DON'T GIVE UP NOW
 An excerpt from Maclean's
 QMC panel discussion on
 the war in Afghanistan

24 | JOINING THE FIGHT
 Michelle Jean embraces her
 military side

25 | TAX DISCORD
 Opposite is a harmonized
 sales tax is required

27 | MEGAPHONE OR GUNT?
 Vancouver's new "Black
 weekend", Alberta's "Proud
 Four" a new nod to Nazism

MACLEAN'S

VOLUME 122 NUMBER 46, NOVEMBER 30, 2009 • SINCE 1905

22 From the Editors: 4 | Mail Bag
 8 | Green Days 10 | Newsweekers

NOV. 30-DEC. 7, 2009

THE BACK PAGES

60 | Music
 The kids are all right—and singing on your favourite records

63 | Film
 Werner Herzog and Nicolas Cage make a dangerous duo

64 | Business
 Hilary Radley returns to making coats women love

68 | Taste
 It's not that hard to have people over for dinner, really

70 | Fame
 The European who is beating ratings on brothers & sisters

71 | Help
 Rude people ask public shaming: thanks to one blogger

72 | Sports
 Did political comedians take the lives of 14 people?

75 | Feedback
 Canada could use some conspiracy theories of its own.

76 | The End
 Joseph Pierre Adelland Lambert: 1939-2009

SUBSCRIBE TO MACLEAN'S AT
WWW.MACLEANS.CA

World

30 | CHÁVEZ VS. OBAMA
 Hugo Chavez has started
 snide-riding again

32 | STASH SPES IN CANADA
 East German espionage here

33 | DALAI LAMA LOVE-IN
 Spirituality and politics
 should never mix

35 | LONG ROAD BACK
 African griefs make a
 comeback, same-sex couples
 fight to adopt in France

Business

37 | LESSONS FROM A FALL
 What investors learned from
 the financial crisis

40 | GAINING CURRENCY
 A Vancouver island town
 prints its own money

42 | BEONWATER
 The latest on the economy

Justice

44 | WHO'S WILL HE LAND?
 Omar Khadr will soon be
 leaving Guantanamo: What's next?

Society

46 | MORALITY
 Centuries: changing views
 on ethical concerns

Health

50 | STITCHING THE PELL
 Women are turning to other
 methods of birth control

MACLEANS.CA

This week on the Web

Got gold?

Maclean's predicts which Canadians will take to the podium at the 2010 Winter Games. macleans.ca/winter2010

BLOGS



JULIE WHISMAN
Chris Matthews just blurted out his best position in his career to date at any moment. It's demagogues that when a I've gained trust to get beyond ideology and present himself as a common sense kind of guy. He's worth up there. No sense what so ever." macleans.ca/whisman



AARON WHERRY
I've would just call it a failure—perhaps the most coveted and controversial word in the Canadian lexicon appears once in the new guide to citizenship. It feels better than the word "unfortunate," which surely not appear at all. macleans.ca/wherry

COLBY COSH

The most voice at Maclean's Blog. General business to C. Day Cosh, who weighs in on politics, arts, sports and more.

WEB POLL RESULTS

How would you rate Ottawa's performance in rolling out the H1N1 vaccine?



Imprecise: people are patching and the government is helping us (56%)

Modestly good they've made the best out of a bad situation (38%)

Modestly bad. This doesn't look good and the government is helping us (6%)

THIS WEEK'S POLL: *residents say*



As at 6 p.m. on Sunday, the poll showed that 50 per cent of respondents said they would go to the opening weekend of the first one. macleans.ca/thisweek

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including health care—has been greatly reduced or eliminated, but will also certainly have significant RIS? savings. I am disappointed to see federal Conservative government, which is not only avoiding taking any action regarding protecting pensioners in this situation, but even voting against the recent Bill C-280 that would, presumably at least, provide a credit for loss of such retirement income. *Bonnie Goodwin, Belleville, Ont.*

AFGHAN OUTCOMES

I AM THE first generation Afghan Canadian family who's proudly Canadian. It's now a child growing up in the many countries that this map shows right now. I would want to have access to the news of the world that Maclean's writes about. You make sense of the crazy world we

live in. What would happen if we in the West bought all of the opium that Afghanistan could produce, and provided it to us on credit through a regulated process? Would this loosen the finances available to the terrorists? Would this cripple the drug gangs terrorizing our communities? What could we do with the money we spend on enforcing prohibitions? *Bill Martin, Grafton, Man.*

BUILD YOUR OWN MOSQUE

I AM APPEALING to the Jewish religious of the Muslims in P.E.I. ("When will P.E.I. Muslims go to pray?" *Notional*, Nov. 18) who wish the government to help them build a mosque with western free loans or cheap land or a cheap building. Whoever accession came to Canada from Germany, Poland and Ukraine, they

heavily export-oriented economy, and a large number of its top producing things of value are adversely impacted by the currency exchange rate. The high income has a very clear negative impact on the value of the services my firm, simply adding to the difficult situation causing passing most firm operations in Canada. So if the readers don't pocket the potential savings, Coyne should be able to buy his assets cheaper than I did. Why not end would be worth to temper with the exchange rate? *Glen Mansfield, Ames, Ark.*

TAKE A STAND, ROSS

WHEN ROSS McBRIDE was asked if he is in favour of marijuana legalization (*Interview*, Nov. 16), he winced and said, "I'm not really going to go down right now." Well, when

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lives. After reading the article "Afghanistan: noble fight or lost cause?" (*Notional*, Nov. 18), I thought of the children who live in Afghanistan and Pakistan. I support our troops and fight everything for them. I am a product of war crimes, hatred and division—unlike this, as a direct and positive result of the influence of Canada, I am incapable of teaching to my children and their peers. This war is no different, not equally important. *Kristina McMeig, Soder, B.C.*

wasn't happy to hear and was glad to see the community, and helped each other to make a new life in a new country. Their focus was to forget the old and adapt to the new. They built schools, churches and community centres for all to use. And, yes, they maintained their beliefs and practised their religion without a problem. They lived by the JFK quote "Ask not what this country can do for you, rather what you can do for this country." *Bernard Martineau, Edmonton*

IN HIS DISCUSSION with Paul Wells about Afghanistan, I was struck by Andrew Coyne's statement about "billions upon billions" in the importance of funds. "Has there been a major war in history where a country has provided an avenue for its treasury to finance a war against itself, and at the same time, the previous harm to its own citizens?"

LOONIE TUNE

IT IS TIME for Andrew Coyne—comfortably ensconced at his desk, with a presumably guaranteed salary, and positioned as a consultant to benefit from a long-flying Canadian dollar—to be complained about the exchange rate. ("The loonie requires urgent attention," *Opinion*, Nov. 18) However, Canada has a

is a good time to talk about the actual issues, Ross? When asked if he still uses pot, he would not even risk out and say no. He says, "I don't really think supporting it one way or the other, in this point, is so much I'm not even at all doing. Quite frankly, the numbers suggest that one way or the other I'd be letting down half of my constituents." Typical Liberal: try to please everyone and you end up pleasing everyone. *Richard Ivey, Ivey School of Business and Discrimination on Cannabis, Napa, Ont.*

We welcome readers to write to letters to the editor (letters@maclean.ca) or to Maclean's, 1000 Fleet Street, One Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, Ont. M5T 1P7. Please supply your name, address and daytime telephone number. Letters should be less than 300 words, and may be edited for space, style and clarity.



A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF AEROSMITH

Rock stars can be as indestructible as lunch. Last week, rumors swirled that lead singer Steven Tyler had quit his band, Aerosmith, after more than 30 years together and countless hits, and Joe Perry, the band's guitarist, said he and the rest of the group would be looking for a singer to replace Tyler. Happily, the boys managed to overcome their differences—Tyler and Perry appeared onstage together in New York City and Aerosmith is reportedly back together.

Good news

Best foot forward

The Canadian news revealed this week it has been using a top-notch high-tech gadget called "StashIt" in training for the Vancouver Games. The device allows the latest edition of the Grey Cup to track their every move down the field—and their evade where to find more speed on course. StashIt was developed at the University of Calgary three years ago, but our skins were sworn to secrecy so that other teams wouldn't get their hands on it. Hey, it's fair when it comes to the Olympics (except, ahem, certain illegal drugs). Too bad women's tri jumpers won't be finding their way down the road—the B.C. Coastal Appeal rejected female jumpers' claims of discrimination last week.

GM gives back

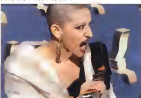
When the Canadian and Ontario governments handed General Motors Canada a \$10.6-billion loan last June, many cynically suggested we'd never see the money again. They were wrong: on Monday, GM announced it would begin to pay back the loan earlier than expected—an initial \$600 million will be returned to Canada in December, and the company expects to repay the rest ahead of the July 2015 maturity date. GM is also considering an IPO in 2014—which could actually make money for Canada and Ontario.

Beefing China

Obama's trade liberalist—what's the message Barack Obama is trying to impress on his new visit to China as U.S. President? Obama and Chinese President Hu Jintao are meeting on Tuesday to discuss climate change and economic policy, the two

later released a joint statement to the press, the first time the leaders of the U.S. and China have done so in more than a decade. Obama also held a town-hall style meeting with Chinese university students; though some reports suggested Chinese authorities ostentatiously chose participants from the ranks of the Communist Youth League. The next step is engaging Beijing on its less-than-stellar human rights record, something Obama has thus far proven reluctant to do.

FACE OF THE WEEK



AWARD-BATING: Christina Ricci, who played Celine Dion in a CBC biopic, poses with her Geminid sword for Best Actress

Ready to e-read

The Kindle is finally coming to Canada. After years of waiting patiently, Canadians will be able to get their hands on Amazon.com's eBook reader, which has been a big hit in the United States. There is a catch—you'll have to buy the device through the U.S. online Kindle store (for \$139) and pay extra for shipping and duties. But the good news is that the Kindle will be here in time for Christmas. Now, if only we could get the online TV service Hulu.com and the Google Voice phone service, we'd be a truly high-tech nation.

We're giving less

After giving record \$4.6 billion to charities in 2007, Canadians scaled back their generosity in 2008. Job losses and a global recession contributed to a five per cent drop in charitable donations—to \$9.2 billion—according to figures released this week by Statistics Canada. Despite the tough times, however, relative generosity hasn't changed much across the country. As was the case in 2007, Prince Edward Island and Alberta are still the most generous.

Bad news

ads—and suggests that a third referendum will occur in the not-too-distant future. With separatism at an all-time low in Quebec, we wish Fortin would fade away. He brought us to the brink once before—and that's over soon.

Don't trust Iran

"Blatant"—that's how an Iranian official described the International Atomic Energy Agency's new report, which charged Iran for being uncooperative about its nuclear ambitions. After Barack Obama revealed in September knowledge of a second hidden nuclear plant, the Iranians went into defence mode, claiming the report was simply a "back-up" of the larger, previously acknowledged one went to go down. Call us crazy, but we don't trust the Iranians when it comes to their nuclear ambitions—why all the secrecy and posturing if this is really about providing power to the country?

Corruption charms

For the second year in a row, Afghanistan and Iraq are at the top of Transparency International's annual survey of the world's most corrupt countries (Somalia rounds out the top three). This is sobering news for those who support the West's efforts toward the rule of law and justice. There is no doubt of the wide array of corruption in both Afghanistan and Iraq—the former's recent election embarrassment was a major failure on the road to democracy. Still, we cannot lose our resolve to fight the Taliban and al-Qaeda, who want to install Sharia law, strip women of all rights and wage a holy war against our freedoms. This survey should only strengthen our commitment.

learned provinces, with median annual donations of \$170 and \$160 respectively. And Quebec is still the angriest, with a median annual donation of \$130.

Parizeau speaks

He's back! In a new book, *La conversation du Québec libre*, a sequel to *Un écrivain* (Quebec Sovereignty Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow), former Quebec premier and separatist movement champion Jacques Parizeau argues that Quebecers would be better able to fight the global recession on their own—that it, unlike the rest of Can-

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In the Warsaw Ghetto, 1943, under the Nazis Poland became a prison where the Germans created their "largest camps of enslavement."

Sorry, Poland



PAUL WELLS

And suddenly there were in the status of another war national controversy. We have grown used to this use of things here at Madelon's, whose editor once said, "If you don't thank you've gone too far, you haven't gone far enough." That can be a pretty rock to roll upon to work. But just this once, the agree won't come to me to cause. It's worth the risk. Here's the tale.

In our issue of Nov. 16, "Our Biggest Lie" was my issue, we carried a long, thoughtful letter by Kate Demjanjuk about the infamous trial in Munich of John Demjanjuk, who is charged with 77,000 counts of accessory to murder for his role as a guard at the Sobibor death camp in Nazi-occupied Poland. "Whether in any way making excuses for atrocity, Kate's four-page article managed to air some of the disqualification with trying Demjanjuk, who is 80, terribly feeble, and was not a senior figure in the Nazi mass-murder apparatus in the first place. Sensitive stuff, but Kate is a very good young reporter and that's not where the trouble lay.

No, the trouble was in three phrases I didn't even notice when I read the article. Together, worse than Demjanjuk had his contribution for "a notorious trial in Poland's Terrible death camp." She tells us again to "Poland's Terrible death camp," and notes that Demjanjuk, who was Ukrainian, "served at those Po-

lish camps." Well, did we ever hear from the Polish Embassy and Polish Canadians after that. The comments under the story when we published it online were furious. The letters were angry. "This was acceptable that you spread absurdity that stands in Poland and Polish citizens!" one letter began, under the subject line PROTEST AGAINST YOUR LIES. Almost simultaneously I received a plain text email from my friend Sylvia Demers, the press and protocol officer at the Polish Embassy in Ottawa. "I just got bombarded by emails and phone calls from the Polish Canadian community," she wrote. We would be getting a letter from the ambassador, she said. "To whom should they send it?"

I forwarded Sylvia's email to our senior associate editor, Bruce Kopylovich, who knows a thing or two about mindless foreign occurrences, being Ukrainian. This kicked off a correspondence between Madelon's and the embassy, and the letter from the ambassador appears elsewhere in these pages. But I'm spending more time on this issue because it is an example of the insistent demands of horrible memory.

If you go to the Polish Foreign Ministry's website today and pull down the news under the "Foreign Policy" tab, the first issue listed is about "Asia and Pacific Region" and Poland's "Enter Partnership" with the countries of the former Soviet Union in "Against Polish Camps." Follow that link and you'll find a list of numerous references to the offending phrase

in the news media of 24 different countries, more than a dozen countries and press corps of judgments sought by Polish authorities in several of those countries, and excerpts from the 2005 annual address to Poland's parliament by the country's then-foreign minister, Adam Rodzik. "I believe the time is ripe, 60 years after the end of the war, for the elementary truth about what really happened in occupied Poland" to come to light, Rodzik told his colleagues. "It was in Polish archives that the Germans created the largest camps of enslavement, where—alongside the Jewish people—Polish and members of other European nations were murdered on a mass scale."

In that context, Rodzik said, "use of the term 'Polish death camps' not only con-

ceals the truth about the perpetrators of this crime, but slanders our nation, which was the first victim of the criminal policies of Nazi Germany."

Enlightened by his ambassador, Peter Ogrodowski, who is leaving Ottawa this week after five extraordinarily productive years here. During that time, he successfully urged Canada to remove visa restrictions on visitors from Poland, strengthened military and economic co-operation between our two countries, and wrote perhaps 50 letters of complaint to news outlets that had not made the Nazi origin of the death camps clear.

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they were the first prisoners."

The war began, of course, when Hitler invaded Poland on Sept. 1, 1939. The house Polishkowskis sheltered. The country's hell was compounded on Sept. 17 when Stalin's armies invaded from the east, in fulfillment of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. The crisis country was a prison alive that. The Nazi penalty for protecting Jews was death for the prisoner's entire family. David Harris, executive director of the American Jewish Committee, has written that the camps "were most emphatically not 'Juden's homes.' This is not a Jewish museum space!"

Ogradinski's father was a key organizer in Zagreb, Poland's wartime clandestine Council for Aid to Jews; a photograph of Professor Ogradinski hangs in the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. He knows our choice of words means no harm. I asked whether he's visited Canada's Rocky Mountains, then reminded him that Canada had no choice in the location of the Rockies. But the Rockies are a resource, not an aberration. Imagine a communist evil being committed in your home by invaders. You would wish the world knew it wasn't your choice. This wouldn't ever stop wishing it. ■

ON THE WEB: For more Paul Wells, and his blog at www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/auwells/

Awful food, commie cars and the bad old days



ANDREW POTTER

Travelling through Eastern Europe a few years ago, my companion and I took a tour of Nova Huta, the Krakow suburb that had been designed by Stalin as the ideal proletarian city. Our guide was Mike, an ex-able 30-year-old in cargo pants and a flat-top who had ditched his last career when he realized the old ladies selling potatoes in the market made more than he would.

Mike drove us around Nova Huta, a lovely old Thibault, pointing out various totalitarian uses, then took us to his rented apartment, which he had tricked out with all manner of Soviet-era furnishings, artwork and appliances. It was all very authentic. It was all very crappy.

This was my first experience with Ostalgic, a nostalgia that is a snafu up of the

German words for east and nostalgia, meaning nostalgia for life in the GDR and the other countries of the former Soviet bloc. Ostalgic is a phenomenon driven by the conviction that what a socialism was often difficult, life was in many ways better. Fear and uncertainty have been the backbone and catalyst of daily life, the two great, but the old Communist nation was more egalitarian and had a greater sense of solidarity and common purpose.

The English document of the Ostalgic movement was the 2004 film *Goodbye Lenin!* about a woman who dips into a coma just as the Berlin Wall is coming down, and when she awakes, her children go to get it together to trick her into believing that the GDR is still alive. Since then there have been any number of Ostalgic-themed movies, television shows and novels, and just last year the Museum of the GDR opened its doors in Berlin.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet empire was one of the greatest events of the 20th century. But in the years passed and the initial euphoria and optimism have given way to a grim reality. Many Germans have started to wonder whether they've been sold a bill of goods. There's a growing feeling that liberalism and capitalism are not all they are cracked up to be, and as the year went, not nearly as good as the old state under the Anker. The gruff spirit on a wall in Warsaw in 1995 put it: "We wanted democracy, but we ended up with the bad stories."

How accurately should we take that? In some ways, nostalgia for the former GDR seems stronger than ever. In a widely reported Pew Research poll released last month, 93 per cent of East Germans agreed with the statement that the GDR had more good sides than bad—confirmation, if anything, of the human brain's ability to bury bad memories in a mudbath of frozen recollections. The same poll reported that only in the Czech Republic and Poland do a majority of citizens believe life is better than or at least as good as it was under Communism, while in almost every country support for the transition to democracy has dropped after 1991.

But what is most remarkable about this nostalgia is how politically impotent it is. There are no serious back-to-Communism movements, and for all their reminiscence about the days of the hammer and sickle, only 16 per cent of East Germans will confess to

actually wanting to live back in the GDR. The truth is, a large majority of Germans on both sides of the old divide now believe unification has made their lives better.

Any political momentum Ostalgic might have had a decade or so ago has since given them been replaced now by a search for more powerful, nostalgic consumption. The left party is back in its old bomb shelters, its leaders sell Communist shirts, furniture, and Germany's superstitious have been flooded recently with tawdry East German brands. There's even a museum dedicated for chankers like the two-stroke Trabant.

What once was so much as the Ostalgic might have this idea, they're just like us. Today's Ostalgic has an entirely consumerist agenda, driven by a desire to close for a shopping experience that harkens back to a simpler, more stable time before the arrival of capitalism.

This, of course, is the very essence of Western capitalism, and for decades now we've been satisfying our desire for status, happiness or inclusion through cars, houses and SUVs. The most powerful contemporary version of this search for the authentic, pre-modern experience in all manner of things local, organic, organic? We've convinced ourselves that stepping off in White Foods for green tea on the way back from the yoga studio is a credible way of getting back in touch with nature, pre-civilized at all.

There is nothing terribly remarkable about the fact that the consumer of former Communist countries is ambivalent about capitalism. So are we, which is precisely why we feel the need to wrap our consumerist urges in the bandwidth of anti-consumerist values.

But Ostalgic behaviour is nothing more than the post-Soviet equivalent of the West's search for authenticity: both are driven by a desire to return to a place outside of the cash nexus, freed of the packaging for status and the competitive consumption of the market economy.

There is one difference: at least the East in Europe has an actual social experiment to serve as the imagined object of their nostalgia. That puts them at an advantage to the West, whose nostalgic aspirations harkens back to a past that never existed, and to which we wouldn't actually want to return even if we could. ■

ON THE WEB: For more Andrew Potter, visit his blog at www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/auwells/



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MITCHEL RAPHAEL ON WHO'S NEW AT 24 SUSSEX AND WHY MP HALL PARTIES HAVE BEEN BANNED

NO PETS FOR HIM

The death of Transport Minister John Harper on Thursday caused international headlines when a "Thatcher's dead" electronic message had Stephen Harper's officials calling London to confirm whether Margaret Thatcher had in fact died. They discovered the former British PM was very much alive. The source of the confusion, Thatcher throat, was a gift to David from four friends when he was a staffer in the Mulroney government. "He saw me through the deficit in '93, then through four successful runs [eventually and indirectly]," says David. Thatcher even appeared on *CNN News and Canada AM* Monday yet if the transport minister will go another cat, Lauren Harper, who often fires letters to 24 Sussex, says David "wouldn't sign." Who knows how long that will take? But one day he will relax up and watch a new four-footed companion. Until that time we have to wait. "No pets, reasonable, have moved in to the homes of party leaders. Rachel Harper got a new Russian dwarf hamster named Jasper. The latest 24 Sussex resident is "not too bright," according to Lauren Harper. "But he loves Christmas with peanut butter in the middle." Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff and his wife, Zsuzsanna Zsuzsaka, got two kittens while back and NDP Leader Jack Layton and his MP wife, Oliva Chow, recently welcomed two cockatoos into their Toronto home. The birds are yet to be named. Green Leader Elizabeth May says that when she moved to her new riding in Yukon, B.C., "I adopted a spider for a while. I called her Charlotte." May's dog Spunky went to university in Halifax with her daughter. Her cat Bowie moved with her to India. Only one party leader has no pet, and some will. Accord-



RACHEL HARPER (top) with Jasper, (bottom left) Peter Stoffer and his collection, Bob McKeown (left) and Brian Murphy with their cat, Rachel Harper (bottom), John Harper and Thatcher, (right) John Harper (left), Michael Ignatieff (right)

ing to an official in the Leader of the Opposition's office, "Mr. Harper has many allergies, as he can't have any pets."

WHERE WAS THE BALL MONITOR?

NDP MP Peter Stoffer wanted to have a ball party to help

increase the huge collection of balls and pins in his office. So he was the spokesman that when he was asked to move offices a while back the officials took one look at the walls and said him to stay put. Ball parties are a tradition on the Hill. MPs often have them when a few

decide to open their offices for a get-together and need the space for spilled beer. Unfortunately, at a recent back an over-the-hill partygoer threw up in the hall. Stoffer says he was told by Kevin McKenna, sergeant-at-arms of the House of Commons, that because of that incident there would be no more ball parties.

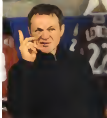
CRIME, JUSTICE AND SOME CANNED TOMATOES

Neil Murphy, 22, has a front-row family seat when it comes to politics. He was recently on the Hill to visit his own MP uncle, Brian Murphy, a Liberal MP from New Brunswick, a MP's father's brother. Justice Minister Rob Nicholson is his mother's brother. He is in New Brunswick. Neil is doing a stint in Brian Murphy's constituency office dealing with issues like crime concerns and other things constituents get upset about, like the person who came into the office demanding the health minister be called over to a purchase of expired canned tomatoes. Neil suggested the constituents speak to the supermarket first.

BOOY AND THE AIRPORT TRAIN

One of Michael Ignatieff's favourite things to do in Vancouver is to take the SkyTrain's new Canada Line, which comes a mile from the airport to downtown. He has done it twice now and promises he'll always take it when he comes to town, even if he becomes prime minister. The SGFP may have something to say about that. ■

ON THE WEB: For more Ottawa stories or to contact Michael Ignatieff, visit michaelignatieff.ca



Ex-NHL player **Claude Lemieux** on how a tough guy broke the figure skating barrier, won over Canadians and sang his heart out

A CONVERSATION WITH CHARLIE GILLIS

He may have finished second, but a creative, downright acrobatic Claude Lemieux was the big revelation of the 1994 Winter Olympics. He spoke to Maclean's about his NHL career, his figure skating, and his life as a performer.

Q Hope you're tired of being asked when did you figure skating started, you with graceful gliding.

A Hey, that's fine. I've always been an underdog. I love people in hockey and underdogism are my life and my physics. I've got a few comments, you know. "This guy's not a short little choppy skate," and I know that wasn't the case—that I could skate pretty well.

Q As a player did you ever give much thought to how you looked as you moved across the ice?

A No, most of my players actually don't like how we skate. Only a few enjoy watching ourselves play. We can do it so fast, so much we could do better. There wasn't a lot of hockey players in my family background, and we never had the financial capability for me to take any special skating classes during the kids' game. It was just something I picked up and went with and loved.

Q You did have a limited career in the NHL, though. That suggests a career option.

A I was sold, really strong on my feet and I was always in balance. Everything that's been better than having a graceful, strong-up-and-down style.

Q You were best known, if correct, as an agitator, and sometimes a dirty player. You were routinely described as the most hated man in hockey. Was anyone up for battle of the Blues as an attempt to show people another side of your personality?

A That was one of the reasons I thought it would be a fun experience, a journey, but I definitely did think this could be an opportunity to show the Canadian people, really who I am. In hockey, you put on this act of anger, you go out on the ice in your equipment and you perform as well as you can with the guys you're out. But most of the tough guys are great people off the ice, and soft spoken and sensitive guys. It's the on-ice aspects of what one would expect.

Q I think up until now—after outside of Montreal—you may have been best remembered as the one who cut Dr. Pepper's hair by taking him backstage and before he even got to his agent's office.

A No, I actually never spent any time with him. People have said I should cut the guy and apologize, but if something really bad happens to you, and the next day the person who did it calls and says, "Oh, I'm sorry, you're like, giddy. You know what I mean? Maybe two or three years later, when it's more serious that can show you I did him that was more than that. It played 1,500 games in the NHL and you remember me for one hair cut."

Q You were also known as a referee's nemesis. How has that aspect of your personality played into this career?

A When you're dedicated, focused, and

in time of person, you're just going to do whatever it takes—within boundaries. In hockey, we pushed those boundaries further because we were physically confronting our opponents. Here, there's no physical contact against your opponent, you're really competing against yourself. I've asked my partner and our coach David Wilson to push me as far as I can go. When the lights go up, it's about your mental strength.

Q Who first asked you to do the show?

A At the moment, I don't know. A former associate of mine, who had contacted me at He'll get an opportunity to move into a full-time outdoor coaching job with the Phoenix Coyotes, so he called me, and asked me if I'd be interested.

Q What was your reaction?

A [Laughing] Uhh, no. I think I'm busy. To be honest, there was fear about how good the quality of the production would be, and how the producers would try to portray us.

Q What changed your mind?

A I found out The Three had contacted. It's been here on Toronto a long time and has a good name in the city, so I figured he would know whether it was going to be a good production. As it turned out, the producers have been great, allowing us to produce our own space on how we felt we should present ourselves to the viewers. I think that's part of the reason everyone from kids to grandparents is enjoying the show. It's fun, it's entertaining, it's a lot of fun. But it's all been done with a lot of class.

Q What was your wife's reaction?

At the very very positive. We've had our ups and downs because the show's been so demanding. One time, she had to spend a lot of time here, and the kids have been back and forth a few times from our home in Phoenix.

Q You did play hockey in Chicago last year to promote for an NHL comeback. Maybe that looked reasonably by comparison.

A When you play hockey, you're not even classically hockey with different people, and that was within our comfort zone. This was completely outside our comfort zone.

Q When you and those players who ended up figure skaters?

A Yes, I always watched and during the Olympics—especially the pairs. I thought it was beautiful how they could be in such perfect sync and move so elegantly.

Q Why do you think you're taken to it so naturally?

A You have to have a good ear for the music, and I'm very musical. It's all about the beat and when the stride happens. I'll know, for example, if I've missed a step just from listening to the music. I don't need my partner to tell me.

Q One of the things the show has done is to show how important athleticism is in figure skating. Why do you think hockey players regard the sport as off-limits?

A I think it's been portrayed that way, and that's wrong. We've done a lot of good with this show by bringing the two sports closer together, and I think hockey players should be all over the opportunity to go recruit some of the figure skating Canada coaches who might have been viewed as people who don't know hockey skating. I really wish I did this 20 years ago. I would have been a better hockey player, and a guy like me can improve his skating at 44, imagine if you could get this kind of education as a young guy.

Q Are there issues for figure skating, not the long-term relationship skating could use, as the music, some bigger, stronger ones.

A Yes. I think we've broken the barrier, but it's not there yet. Maybe we've brought out of the closet a lot of people who wish they could go out and be comfortable as figure skaters. Hopefully figure skating in Canada will be better because they will have bigger, stronger ones who have been hiding, not making themselves available, not being integrated into the figure skating world, because of their size.

Q Speaking of masculinity, what makes your wardrobe selections?

At the very very positive. We've had our ups and downs because the show's been so demanding. One time, she had to spend a lot of time here, and the kids have been back and forth a few times from our home in Phoenix.

Q Any pretty pretty skirts get left on the dressing room floor?

A Well, you know they go on me so I see through skirts. I think, "Yes, no. That's not going to happen."

Q You were one of the first players in the country to touch over-figure skates from hockey skates. Why did you do that?

A I knew that as a line skater the show, I would not be that impressed with a hockey player doing a few spins and carrying girls around in his hockey skates. I would be impressed with a guy who's learned to do those things, who's learned to go comfortable with figure skates.

Q What's the principal difference?

A A figure skater shows you forward right away. And your radius is different—it's built to turn, so it allows you to get much better at that. It's actually got two flat spots under the blade, one at the front and one at the back, because there are some moves you do on your heels and some on your toes. That really creates a different feeling from hockey skates, which has one flat spot in the middle.

Q How does that feel to you?

A Oh, I did a couple of those skates right off the line. My right knee hit hard.

Q You lacked out with your partner. She's been known as one of the best ice dancers in the world. How does the dynamic between you two work?

A I thought that looked so much like [laughing] No, the fact I'm older—I've got a good 30 years on her—has helped, because she's been more like my little sister. The fact that she's single, not married, could have been uncomfortable. But she's very driven in her work and she's got a good head on her shoulders. Somebody who leaves home at the age of 11 to go skate, living with other families so she can compete at the top of her sport, as going to be teenagers.

Q People were flustered last week when you skated to the sound of your own voice, recorded by Leonard Cohen's Hallelujah. Are you a class amateur here?

A I do like the music. Usually we'd end up singing for the studio. I gave up on a very musical family. My grandfather was a really good singer, and my sister was a music teacher at Quebec where she was. I've sung in public, but before last week the highlight of my singing career was to sing to my wife at our wedding—Hallelujah. You know, I like it. I love you, by Rod Stewart.

Q Did you cut, there was a lady giving the rights to broadcast it. Is that your version of Hallelujah. Did the job fall to you?

A They wanted a duet, featuring a male with a deep voice. My wife and I were just for dinner and she said, "Why don't you do it?" I was like, you're crazy. I didn't even know the lyrics. So I got home that night, and I was like, [sings]. "I heard there was a secret chord." It's difficult song in some ways, but it was a good sign for me, and I think it showed we were willing to do that little bit over.

Q Was that your first recording session?

A It was, and that was my only one.

Q I heard that you are pretty good friends with Wayne Gretzky. Does he know you're doing this?

A I haven't spoken to him lately, but he wouldn't be surprised. He knows me. He's even heard me sing.



"They wanted me to wear a see-through shirt. I said, 'That's not going to happen.'"

Q You should know you once put your father and I in your skates. We're Montreal Canadiens fans and in the last 10 years we've seen you play in Vancouver. You once checked Rich Foy, and once the Canucks fans in our arena couldn't get at you. It looked like you were going to take out their anger on him.

A That was in our last skating, right? Are you sure it was when I checked Rich Foy in front of the boys?

Q I thought it was Foy, but I could be wrong.

A Well, sorry, but I was lucky to get out of there alive myself. M



FROM LEFT: Chris Alekakis, Herivelina Maphouang, Scott Taglia, Peter Van Duyn, Andrew Coyne and Paul Wells speak in NetFest

NOBLE FIGHT OR LOST CAUSE?

What to do in Afghanistan was the subject of a Maclean's panel debate last week in Halifax, broadcast live by CPAC. Joining Andrew Coyne and Paul Wells were Chris Alexander, Canada's former ambassador to Afghanistan, former soldier and editor of *Esprit de Corps* magazine; Scott Taylor, and military analyst Mercedes Stephenson. CPAC's Peter Van Dusen moderated the discussion.

While in Kandahar, they actually poll the residents quite frequently about how they feel. Kandahar residents feel substantially less safe than they did a couple of years ago. They have a lot less confidence in the government than they used to. No wonder, after the kind spectacle of the elections this summer.

Until 2009, the deadliest month for coalition forces in Afghanistan was July 2009: 46 soldiers died. We are now four months in a row with a substantially higher—nearly double—death toll than in July 2009. Those risks could be sustainable if there was some kind of light at the end of the tunnel, but what we keep getting is more turmoil. Afghanistan is the smallest of a set of hotspots of international

terrace, which is Afghanistan and Pakistan. When we cross the mountain, the bad guys just move across the mountain into Afghanistan and vice versa.

Coyne: Afghanistan has to be seen in the context of the situation in Pakistan—where we have an insurgency that would take enormous resources to defeat for NATO in Afghanistan—and in the broader fight against “global terrorism,” where the best slogan for recruiting of Qaeda fighters is, “We’re winning.” Everybody wants Pakistan to get serious about going after its own Taliban. Why are the Pakistanis going to do that if they think we’re going to leave Afghanistan, if they’re going to have Taliban now come on down

does? It's true that we have not defeated the Taliban. But the Taliban haven't defeated us either; they cannot seize power as long as we're there. As long as NATO remains we can train up the Afghan army.

If we were proposing no change in strategy that would be one thing, but we are on the verge right now of bringing in 40,000 more troops from the U.S., of changing fundamentally the strategy toward counterinsurgency. That's an odd time to pull out.

Well, I'll just note that what we've already seen this year is 17,000 supplemental U.S. troops in Afghanistan, and that has led pretty much directly to a near doubling of the casualty rate.

Nonetheless, it's certainly a noble cause. We're celebrating 20 years since the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989. Afghanistan after that period experienced 22 years of neglect that allowed terrorism to take root, that allowed a civil war in stark horror on that population. The process of overcoming the ills of that period only began in 2001. Building institutions takes a long time, especially institutions like police. Canada has made a difference as lead investor in many areas of development. But the job's not finished.

Supplement 1 is a very challenging and difficult fight, but when in Canada's history have we given up simply because something was difficult? I think this is the fight that will define our generation. So much of the Canadian debate when we talk about whether we should stay or go, has evolved around domestic politics rather than what's going to happen to this region, the embolizing of global jihad, what that means for Western

accuracy in the long run, as well as Canada's international reputation.

Taylor: It was originally a public cause, but we never took that on as a light. When we first went into the Taliban were already deformed. It was going to be a two-year mission. The original budget was some \$250 million. The idea was to get the elections up and running, have a government established, provide some support to the Afghan army to get it self-sufficient and by 2001 we were to come home.

That's what we were told on in Canada and now look at the numbers they're talking about, up to 518 billion, 112 families, 800 wounded and a lot of these guys permanently disabled. We stepped into this quagmire. The election this summer has proven that democracy is dead. That part of the experiment

game. We tend to seriously not think what we're doing there to make this worth what we've invested in it so far. It's taken eight years to train an Afghan army. His may have shown Afghans can fight, but they simply choose not to fight that same level of intensity when they're fighting for something as ineffective as the Karzai government.

‘WE NEED TO RETHINK OUR INVESTMENT IN AFGHANISTAN’

Taylor: When we did the initial planning, the only casualties we expected to take were from incidental unexploded ordnance, or criminal activity. Now we can't go outside our front gates in Kandahar without being bumped. It's not the number of casualties; it's the slowest lack of progress. We've talked the talk about building up the Afghan army by forces to be self-sufficient. When we went in the early days, they did it on the dirt-cheap *Al Jazeera* recruits who give you two weeks of training for the police force. We see it attracting *Kosovar* warlords and thugs and giving them

uniforms and equipment, crossing the line and start that was beginning to prey upon its own people again. So we made a lot of mistakes in terms of winning hearts and minds.

Sopherson: People say, "There haven't been enough troops," and absolutely there haven't been. If I'm an average villager and you're coming to my village and saying, "I'd like to know who's Taliban here, I'd like to know where the IED factory is," and I know I'm not going to use you up on fire over weapons, but I know that the Taliban is watching me why am I going to co-operate with you?

If you think of counter emergency, think of it as an upside-down triangle, and that hole bit at the bottom, that's the military bit. The rest is all civilian. But we haven't seen the real ones yet, because the security hasn't been

The WAB was budgeted at \$250 million. It may end up costing as \$1 billion.



**'WE NEED TO SERIOUSLY
RETHINK WHAT WE'RE DOING
IN AFGHANISTAN TO MAKE
OUR MISSION WORTH WHAT WE'VE
INVESTED IN IT SO FAR'—SCOTT TAYLOR**

there. And in the absence of these things, the building of civil society hasn't been done to instill confidence in Afghans.

Tyler: we put primary packets of weapons out and had a permanent presence in those villages, our continuity role would be akin to what the Russians experienced, because they would be able to overwhelm in its small outposts. So we'd keep our gayian large central store, well protected. This is a coalition of the reluctant. Not one of the 42 countries contributing wants to spend one soldier's life or one dollar more than they have to, and that means that we're not going to put gayian at risk in small groups. We still don't have a single Fushia soldier in the Canadian Forces, and

I'm sure with most of our NATO allies it's the same thing. So they're saying that we are still strangers operating pretty much blind and deaf in this area, and you can't win a counter-insurgency with those tactics.

Alexander Dzhirkov's achievement is during the Canadian Forces' not having Indian speakers, because that's not the point: they have worked extremely well with the Afghan army, with the police, and with Afghan civil organizations, to the point where our model of working with civilian allies taken on board by other allies, including the U.S. The best shortcoming—which Merceda gestured at—numbers. Counter-insurgency needs time and a state of counter-insurgents that is not welcoming. We saw that in Malaya, in Northern Ireland, everywhere counter-insurgency has

succeeded. In Afghanistan, we've never had it. It will take a larger Afghan army, larger Afghan police, and more international forces.



WE
TAYLOR

Goyner Scott, it seems to me that you were arguing in terms of the old strategy. If the argument was, "Can we go out and exterminate the 'filth', no, and no amount of numbers are going to change that because they just come flooding in from Pakistan. But if the strategy is not to do that, but to protect the population, to win the mosaic, surely numbers can make a difference in that situation."

Taylor: It depends how we supply them. Culturally, we've made huge gain. If they're offered a meal inside one of the villages, they're going to refuse to take it because they don't want to get dysentery, but that is a huge inside to someone who's offered to break bread with you. We have done just will treat individual

like explosives—drips being the lowest aerial in the Islamic world—and it will assassinate them, or we'll have soldiers enter a house where the women are, which only drives up the cruelty of the people.

If we insist to get serious about this, and we mean to get the Afghan army self-sufficient, we need to move on that. The reason the Afghan army took so many casualties is because in the early stages it was a 10-week training program and we gave them old discarded crap, and put them out there very ill-equipped. They're not stupid. They're not stupid. They're not stupid. They look like Kobayashi with all that body armor, night-vision goggles, and they're standing there in an old American uniform with a nasty old Kalashnikov.

Stephenson: I'm wondering if Scott is maybe confusing Canadian soldiers with some of our allies. Trevor Greene had an axe put through his head at a village about because he was sitting there with his helmet off to show respect. They are very, very good at connecting with the local population. They don't go blowing through villages on "provocation patrols" and not get far off their vehicles. This is where Gen. Scott's McChrystal got the idea to expand the entire NATO strategy into watching the Canadian Forces and the way they connected to the local people.

Alexander: There are two things that have made it worse that we didn't anticipate. First, that the Taliban would regroup and come back in large numbers. And secondly, we would not have predicted that in late 2009 the world's opium production, by and large, would be concentrated in Helmand and Kandahar, fueling that insurgency.

Building institutions takes time, and rebuilding resources from the U.S. and other countries has taken time, especially when they had a different priority in 2001: to start, mainly Iraq. So we haven't had the resources to have a chance of doing the job. President Obama has deployed more troops, he's thinking about deploying still more. That may just bring us to the point where we start to see light at the end of the tunnel.

Coyne: Chris, we talked a bit about the infrastructure and the military benchmarks. What about the democratic standpoint? Is

there any good news in that election, or is it true, as Scott said, that democracy is dead?

Alexander: I think it's far from dead. Five million votes were cast. Hundreds of thousands were frustrated but the vast majority were cast in good faith. It's the Afghan people that everyone's been trying to protect. The result, President Karzai's second term, is legal. The fraudulent votes were by and large thrown out thanks to a very tough, admirable, hard period of work by an elec-

tion greater degree if we had a NATO-wide policy that gave people flexibility in their local areas. Why are we focused only on the central government?

Coyne: We've also had a lot of justified complaints about the conduct of our NATO partners. We've done the dangerous work, while a lot of our NATO friends have not contributed as much.

Alexander: There are countries with troops, they all have different rules, but NATO has brought more countries who combat than anyone predicted. There are now six with troops on the ground. Denmark has a higher casualty rate than Canada. They haven't fought a war since 1964.

Stephenson: Afghanistan is the test of NATO, the only functioning military alliance in the world. This isn't just about Afghanistan. What is the broader geopolitical outcome if NATO is seen to no longer be relevant? It's highly destabilizing. And for Canada, one of the founding members, to be the first to leave Afghanistan? NATO already is very fragile. What's going to replace the status of conflict to the future? The nature of conflict has changed and this is the only alliance capable of deploying allied troops. Are we ready to be the last country to begin pulling that thread that will pull apart NATO?

Coyne: Chris, the Prime Minister used to say we aren't an arbitrary deadline. Now it seems like he's setting an arbitrary deadline of 2011. Is that terrible?

Alexander: Parliament has passed a motion. That motion has been passed by all parties, but the debate is happening in Washington, in Brussels, in Afghanistan itself, and Canadian debate needs to be connected to all of those other debates. President Karzai's debate, an advance of his inauguration next week, when the president will be far less government in 2010. President Obama is debating how to prosecute counter-insurgency on a scale the U.S. has never before in Afghanistan. Those decisions will be very important for everyone. So we must focus this 2011 debate on a global debate—there's lots of room for debate. The Prime Minister—and many others—have agreed that our engagement must continue in some key areas, and we should look at what's needed.

'COUNTER-INSURGENCY NEEDS TIME. IT WILL TAKE A LARGER AFGHAN ARMY, A LARGER AFGHAN POLICE AND MORE INTERNATIONAL FORCES.' —CHRIS ALEXANDER



132 Canadian soldiers have died in the war, and 400 more have been wounded

second complaints commission, headed by a Canadian but with UN authority. All of that speaks to the promise that wouldn't have been possible in Afghanistan five years ago.

Taylor: That's a pretty good spin on what happened? This is actually Karzai's third term. He was appointed for two years, then he was elected, and now we're hearing that maybe even that first election wasn't as legitimate as we were told. He's not able to unify the country. We've provided him the troops, the money, waged these elections, and if that's all that goes on that first, it isn't speaking up, that doesn't really bode well.

Stephenson: We're always talking about central government in Afghanistan, and Karzai, but what Afghans have the most experience with is local, and there's been very little focus on local. And it's much easier to sustain integrity at the local level. It's perceived by Afghans as being much less corrupt, and it's a program that many of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams could focus on to a

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Taylor: This [area] takes time to build institutions—America's been eight years. The Afghans know how to fight, and we're not creating an institution that's going to have to go in and fight a few World War II-style armored warfairs. If we can get them convinced that there is a reason for them to fight for whether Afghanistan, we're on the way to success. Unfortunately, we sort of handed our coat to the Afghan forces and took on the fight on our own and forgot that, no, in fact this isn't our fight. Obviously it's going to be an Afghan solution to Afghanistan, and that's where the solution has to come from.

Stephenson: If we pulled out at this point, they wouldn't be capable of fighting these wars, and that's part of the critical need for there. The Canadian Forces don't conduct operations in Kandahar without their Afghan army partner. When we go into these village projects we're talking about, the Afghan army is actually the one repelling the Taliban attacks. But if you simply say, "Look, we're done, this is too difficult, we're not going to stick around," why would they want to fight for you? Of course they won't. And so you do have to work with them.

Wells: Does anyone believe that development work can continue in the south without military escort and a hostile group in the neighborhood?

Stephenson: I've deeply concerned about the future of not only Afghanistan but the region and Pakistan of NATO partner. Start with Afghanistan. What happens to all of the people who co-opted with the West? They got engaged out, so we're taking away their support ability to people we're now leaving the hands of the Taliban. Would the Taliban expand on some Afghanistan? Likely, because they're far more aggressive than the other groups. Would they necessarily march back to Kabul? When can someone say. Even more clear than that, perhaps, is another civil war.

Looking at Pakistan, who is the message that is sent to Pakistan, the crucial point of the puzzle? This is a country that is highly destabilized, that has nuclear weapons, and al Qaeda and jihadism. If we say we're not committed to Afghanistan, but by the way, Pakistan, we'd really like you to take care of those al Qaeda guys, why would the Pakistanis

government put these kinds of resources into undermining a movement that, on one way, has served their strategic interests, if the West isn't serious about fighting it?

Wells: It's refreshing to hear someone say, discovering that there are repercussions for Pakistan in the international jihad. It was the factory where it was produced for 20 years and no one said boo. And it's refreshing to hear people say, "Well, that damned Iraq war has been under resourcing Afghanistan."

THE AFGHAN army may be reluctant to fight for the government of Hamid Karzai



'IF WE PULLED OUT, THEY WOULDN'T BE CAPABLE OF FIGHTING ON THEIR OWN, AND THAT'S PART OF THE CRITICAL NEED TO BE THERE'—MERCEDES STEPHENSON



especially people who spent half a decade christening the Iraq war.

Coyne: But likewise, the people who are now saying, "we can't win, this is a quagmire," were saying the same thing in 2006 in Iraq before the surge, and the surge worked. So if a change in strategy worked there, why are we running up the white flag now before we've even made the change in strategy?

Mercer: North America was attacked by al Qaeda—which partnered with the Taliban on the basis of a plan forged in Afghanistan. They're now trying to regain their beachheads there, from neighboring Pakistan. They have failed, so far. But security forces in Pakistan have not even raised a finger against them in many of the places where they do their most expensive training. North American has not had military successes in years, and even before that they were glancing blows. If the stability's going to come, and the interior gray's going to be cleared, we're going to have to talk across borders.

Coyne: Mercedes, is there any kind of end point? How long is too long, how much cost in lives and money is too much?

Stephenson: There has to be an end point. If there's not, then you're not going to be defining your strategy properly, and you're not going to be putting pressure on the Afghan institutions to grow the way they need to, in, for example, calling Karzai on the fraud. Are we going to see Afghanistan enough into a democratic Western state? Absolutely not, and that shouldn't be our goal. A secure and stable Afghanistan should be. It has to be a country that is capable of looking after its own security, that is not her business to ensure.

Before, when we were in Afghanistan, there were very girls in school, and now we have millions. It's very real change, but we can't have this Afghan culture of expecting a no change over night. We've made better Yugoslavia for over a decade. That was an established European state, and we're looking at a country coming out of the stone age.

Coyne: There was a lot of talk about Canada "not being in it," but you can't just decide that unilaterally. I think we have to be at the table with NATO. I think we have to set a good example now, understanding our frustrations with the other partners.

Certainly think we're going to come under a lot of pressure from the Americans if Obama goes ahead with getting 40,000 more troops in, and I think we have to take that seriously.

Wells: I greatly fear that we're not going to begin to have a serious debate about Canada's small part in that whole Western strategy until after the Canadian election of 2009 when ever. This is not a country that handles serious debates well before elections.

Stephenson: There's not a political appetite in this country to discuss Afghanistan. It hasn't been an honest discussion, it's been driven cynically by discussions about casualties. I don't think any of those soldiers want that, so driving this debate, and not to have all of the open in just on the table in October of 2011. And that's not just the government, it's all of the parties, it's the punditocracy, it's everybody who's involved in this who needs to get back in the game, and have an honest discussion about what this means for Canada and for international security. ■



Some smiles come full circle.

Spread the **RITZ**



SALUTE OF SUPPORT: I have had the opportunity to work alongside you," she told the soldiers. "You can see how far I have come."

JOINING THE FIGHT

Michaëlle Jean has become enamoured of the Canadian Forces

BY ANDREW WHEAT As a woman in politics and a representative of equity, there has always been a fascination with Michaëlle Jean's army. Other glimmers at the Governor General's handily skirted from the subject. It was with some reluctance that Peter Marshall, anchoring the CBC's coverage of Remembrance Day ceremonies in Ottawa, featured a review of Jean's appearance. "She seems to lack pretty sticking, and I think most Canadians have agreed with this position, in allowing any outfit she chooses to wear," he declared.

This, though, was different. Standing beside Prince Charles, Jean appeared on national television, dressed in her military uniform. "When we see the adjective, this was something more than fashion. This was Michaëlle Jean, commander-in-chief."

"Part of the role of the Governor General is to express as a person our feelings and sentiments," says Peter Russell, professor emeritus of political science at the University of Toronto. "And though we're all divided about the war in Afghanistan, we're not divided about our support for the men and women who are serving there. I think that's why we had such a splendid turnout at

Remembrance Day. Her being there in that uniform, I thought, was just terrific."

This role of commander-in-chief was officially bestowed upon the governor general in 1947. And even though Jean appeared publicly in uniform earlier this year, it was perhaps the first time she fully embraced the role before the nation. It was also, in keeping with Governor General's who has sought an emotional connection with Canadians, an extremely personal gesture—once arrived at after a military officer on leave at Rideau Hall encouraged her to consider wearing a uniform as tribute to those who serve. "It was the right suggestion at the right time," says Martha Simons, Jean's press secretary.

Just as quickly, she declined in a navy uniform during a ceremony in Halifax: this time, "I would like to begin by confiding something to you," she told members of the navy there. "I grew up under the yoke of a ruthless dictator, whose military uniform came to symbolize the brutal repression of the people, tyranny and massacre. So when my commander-in-chief of the Canadian Forces, I have had the opportunity to work alongside you—the women and men of the country who don the uniform. You can see how far I have come."

The young Hansard is now the commander-in-chief of the Canadian Forces. And the Governor General will likely have the commander-in-chief of a military unit in his or her immediate vicinity in the future. When she addressed the country for the first time as Governor General last year, she said, "Before Canada had unified the vast majority of its current coastline—Afghanistan was not explicitly involved. This speech laid out the ideals she had most

fervently pursued: service, community, engagement and equality, with a special emphasis on connecting with young people. She has deflected the epithets "brave" and "valiant," breaking down stereotypes. Days before reading the Throne Speech last fall, for instance, she convened a meeting of street youth in downtown

Ottawa. In May, while visiting Nunavut, she famously ate her seal heart in solidarity with the Inuit. In Edmonton this summer, she sang and danced and spoke hopefully of gay her.

A month after that, Jean made her second trip to Afghanistan and delivered an emotional salute to her troops. "Know that your fellow Canadians are very proud of what you are accomplishing here and are very proud of the sacrifices you are making," she said. Days later, with the death of another

soldier, Jean deviated from her traditional statement of mourning to reflect at length. "The people of Afghanistan support progress, democracy, the reconstruction of peace, the rebuilding of their country, the respect of rights and freedoms, the equality of women, education and development," she wrote, "and Canada, in turn, supports their efforts and initiatives to promote viable Afghan relations to Afghanistan."

A number of governors general during a military uniform, but only since the Korean War in the 1950s has Canada been regarded as it is now, as rarely in more years has the commander-in-chief been part of the position. Adrienne Clarkson, Jean's immediate predecessor, twice wore New Year's in Afghanistan—John Robson said, her husband, rang in 2004 with a platoon, taking up a muddy mountain near Kabul. In 2002, she was in Germany to meet the bodies of Canadians killed in an infamous friendly fire accident and was hailed as a hero when she left the job. "It is not by accident that in the Canadian Forces started looking back a decade of darkness, past a long period of insecurity and past a lingering feeling of shame, that you were our commander-in-chief," said Gen. Rick Hillier, then chief of the defence staff.

Jean has been to Afghanistan twice and regularly attends remembrance ceremonies at the Canadian Forces base in Toronto, Ont., where the dead from Afghanistan are buried. "Many of you have shared your pain with me," she told supporters and family members this week at the inaugural presentation of the "Soldier's Medal." "You bravely told me about loved ones killed in Afghanistan and know that Canadians share the pain and the pride with you. You are not alone."

This is perhaps not among the accolades she intended to break down, but the chasm between Canada and its understanding of itself as war may still lay other aside. And the closing of that gap may coincide with a new relevance for the governor general's office. In Clarkson and Jean—both originally granted to outsiders—the position has its own prominence, and not only because men, only politicians have forced political consequence upon the wingtip.

"I think they were more conscious than other governors general in their job to help Canadians better understand their country," Russell says. "This they have a real mission to help Canadians identify with Canada. And for a lot of people that needs a person, and these two people, partly because they didn't have political backgrounds, they transcended politics. They were people of great warmth and warmth." Should the person appear in uniform it would seem only to lend greater meaning to both.

A few kind words for harmonization

It isn't a tax grab. Prices won't increase. So why all the fuss?

BY ANDREW WHEAT

Do the people leading the charge against the raising of the sales tax on B.C. and Ontario with the federal GST realize that it is the first time such a reform has been introduced? Do they suppose the public does?

It would be one thing to attempt to whip the population into hysteria against a "tax, untaxed without" that had never been implemented elsewhere. It would be tremendously an endorsement of the doctrine that Nothing Should Ever Be Done for the First Time—but it would at least be coherent, in a demographic way.

But the forces against the plan to convert the two provinces' existing sales taxes next July into a broader, GST-style value-added tax—raising army of special interests and opposition parties that includes the federal NDP and the National Citizens Coalition, the Ontario NDP and the Ontario Progressive Conservatives, the B.C. NDP and Bill Vander Zanden—must confront the trouble some fact that their provinces (Quebec, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and New Brunswick)

have already done so, without ill effect. And not only then: at last count, 345 countries around the world had implemented similar value-added tax regimes. Not one of them has worsened them.

Likewise, a campaign that raked against sales taxes of any kind, on the grounds that they are regressive, complex, etc., would have a certain reverence to it. If the opposition were proposing to abolish the provincial sales tax, they would at least be in an honourable political tradition, even if they would have to explain where else to find the revenue it raises. But that is not their position.

Rather, the proposition they wish to uphold is this: that the two provinces should continue to tax new goods and services, but not others; that the tax should apply, where it does apply, at widely uneven rates, depending on how many times it has been imposed at various stages in the production chain from one input to finished good, and last, that they should, through the combined operation of two separate and inconsistent sales taxes, federal and provincial, each with their own set of exemptions, as effect maintain five different regimes in each province, depending on which of the two tax applies in any given case. Both GST and PST, GST and PST, PST but no GST, and neither GST nor PST.

Thus, stricken of its coherence, is what the

THE ANTI-TAX CHARGE: Includes Ontario's NDP and Conservatives—and Bill Vander Zanden.



apportion amounts to a fourth division to the status quo, no matter how proteges, and swapped to the government for that change must, by definition, make things worse. But change in this case amounts only to avoiding the worst damage of the current regime (infant, a horizontal sales tax [HST]) amounts to three things:

One, lowering the existing provincial sales tax to cover the same broad range of goods and services as the GST. (It is only so that provincial governments have no reason to complain.)

Two, reducing the tax paid on business inputs, as with the GST, so that only the tax on a business's "value added" (the difference between what it charges its customers and what it paid its suppliers) gets passed on to the next stage of production. This means the final consumer only pays the 10% once, and at a single rate.

And three, simplifying the tax, with a common federal and provincial tax base and an integrated collection system—though this is achieved somewhat by the exemption I mentioned.

Why bother? Taxing to be preferred? Because you want people to make economic decisions, whether as consumers, workers or investors, based on the real costs and benefits of their choices—not the tax preferences attached to each. Every sector that was previously exempt from PST in each province is now happily complaining of ill treatment. But all of them are really saying is that they were the beneficiary of special decisions before.

Does this amount to a "tax grab," as so often is complained? It would, if the only thing being contemplated were a simple broadening of the existing sales tax base. But here's another reality: Just as we broaden the GST, it also means reducing the tax on business inputs. So while the price of some goods will undoubtedly rise as a result of the reform, the price of others will fall.

You, glad that the tax was previously built into the price of less desirable goods, to be taxed again at the next stage of production, and the rest, and the rest, until it has compounded to who knows what level, now the consumer will pay only the official rate. Many goods that are now subject to the PST, therefore, will see absolute price reductions. Even goods that were exempt until now—at the retail level—may see little or no price increase, since the mean input costs drop out. Because, in effect, they were taxed: it was just buried in the price.

I know this conflicts with the inevitable folk-economic wisdom that as cost savings are everywhere in the universe, but are

simply pocketed by business, who are, all of them, collecting in a massive nationwide price fixing scheme and current charge what ever they like (why do prices ever fall, for?) But in fact that's exactly what happened in the provision that previously had earned a study for the C.D. Howe Institute (fixed prices in the Atlantic province generally fall by 0.3 per cent, while some large towns fall as much as three per cent. The same happened when the GST first came in, as a replacement



DALTON MCGUINTY is Ontario's minister of finance. He is actively to abandon the sales tax plan.

ment for the old Manufacturers Sales Tax.

Oh, the GST. We all know what happened there, don't we? As a recent National Post editorial put it: "Canadians were assured the GST would be revenue-neutral when it was introduced two decades ago, and look how that turned out." Yes, let's look, shall we? In its last full year, 2010, the MST yielded some \$17.7 billion, equivalent to 13.1 per cent of federal revenues, or about 2.5 per cent of GDP. In 2009-10, the last full year before the Harper government began cutting the GST, the tax yielded \$1.8 billion. The gap? Hardly. In fact, this was close to 14.5 per cent of revenues, as a share of GDP, it was also down,

to 2.4 per cent.]

Do the price reductions in some goods completely offset the price increases in others? No. But the extra costs hardly justify all the outsourcing. A study by TD Bank predicts a net increase in prices from Ontario's HST of 0.7 per cent. The Ontario Chamber of Commerce puts the extra per capita cost at less than \$70, while the B.C. government says a single person earning \$25,000 will pay just \$43 more a year. Of course, to those on very low income, that's still an extra burden they can hardly afford. It is the thing they don't have in both provinces, even though they're coming low-income sales tax on either part of the exercise, is amounts that exceed any addition to the cost of living.

And just in case the rest of us feel left out, both provinces are also bringing in middle-class tax cuts—\$1,000 per family in Ontario and income tax cuts. Add it up, and both provinces stand to lose significant sums from the reform, though both are compensated by the transfer of billions of dollars from the federal treasury. You wouldn't think provinces would have been lulled into the right thing, 30 years too late, but there you are.

So it isn't a tragedy. And it isn't just a tax cut for business. But it is, one whole mess of the savings, according to the TD Bank, get passed on to the consumers, the rest—\$6.3 billion—goes to reducing the cost of investment. The C.D. Howe Institute has calculated sales tax reforms will reduce Ontario's per capita effective tax rate on capital by 15 per cent over the next 10 years. Its former president, Jack Mizner, in a new study for the University of Calgary's School of Public Policy, estimates that will trigger more than \$47 billion in new investment as the province over the next decade, and \$90,000 new jobs.

Indeed, the benefits of harmonization are so great that it is difficult to imagine other provincial governments following suit. Before too long, Ontario and B.C. will be followed by Manitoba and Saskatchewan (Alberta has no sales tax), whose industry will be anxious not to be put at a competitive disadvantage relative to their neighbours. Harmonization will be the case. It is to be defended as firmly as ever it was opposed. ■

ON THE WEB: For more, Andrew Cayne, visit his blog at www.mackenzie.com/andrecayne

FEMALE SKI JUMPERS REFUSE TO LOSE HOPE

"My boys are from disappointment. But we still have faith and we're just giving us. We've got to keep fighting for it," says Calgary skier Charlotte Miché. She, indeed, took her last jump after the U.S. Open at Aerial skill down female ski jumpers used to compete in the 2010 Olympics. Ski jumping is one of two Winter Olympic sports open only to men, female athletes have argued that excluding them is a violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms



Vancouver police buy 'sonic gun'



Pittsburgh police used a similar device during the G20 meetings.

BY JEFF CUTLER • It is a sonic weapon? Or a super-powered pepper spray? Either way, a B.C. human rights group says the Vancouver Police Department's recent purchase of a long-range acoustic device (LRAD) in advance of the 2010 Olympics is an outrage.

The LRAD gun is a portable device about the size of a searchlight that, according to makers, Resonance Technology Corp., can carry a voice of distance of 100 m in a crowd. More alarming, it can emit a beam of sound that reaches 140 decibels one metre away. That's like standing near a jet engine at takeoff, says Mike Atch, an audiologist with the Canadian Hearing Society, and would cause pain and could lead to hearing loss. The B.C. Civil Liberties Association fears that what it is calling a "sonic gun" will be used at protests during February's G20.

Vancouver police say they bought the LRAD to "communicate more effectively in open air conditions," like open-air concerts. Says Stephen Houghton, a spokesman for the police, the LRAD is a "public safety" device to control protests during September's G20 meeting.

The RCMP is comparing the LRAD to police use of tear gas, assembly at the centre of a deadly injury in the 2002 death of 14-year-old Doreenka at Vancouver's airport. "Are we not doing things backwards again, by introducing a weapon to the arena first and then discussing policy and safety last?" asks executive director David Eby. American Tech Policy Group insists their product is not a weapon, but can support police in dispersing protesters and peacefully prevent the use of force. The company recently announced and ordered from the U.S. Army Research of over \$1.2 million.

The 'Fiscal Four' fight the deficit

BY STEPHAN RÖHLER • Four young right-wing Tory MLAs in Alberta have banded together to demand that the province's "Fiscal Four"—an all-farmer, one for all political coalition—to keep the Alberta Tories on a tight fiscal leash.

Compared to veteran MLA Doug Griffiths, from rural Alberta, and Calgary models Jason Denham, Rob Anderson, and Kyle Stewart, the quartet were a legislative fiscal framework that would create Alberta's current deficit position by cutting spending, creating a provincial savings plan and introducing a more competitive tax policy. They also want to limit the size and scope of government.

After 10 years, the four young Tories are now in a caucus before Premier Ed Stelmach is named a veteran of the party. Stelmach is the 1990s liberal for deeper, faster cuts under Ralph Klein. But this cohort arrived at a decision time for the Tories—the party has dipped to a 16 per cent in the polls, due largely to a \$6.9-billion deficit, and a recent poll showed the fiscal band-aid would hurt Alberta's economy. The Tories in Calgary believe that means, for now, survival is a leading priority over tax cuts in which one of four delegates can be elected in favour of taxing less.

So some say in the future a province to the bankruptcy of the Tories. However, for one, media headlines in September after announcing Stelmach in the wake of an embarrassing Tory by-election loss. "We both agree we need to do our jobs better," says All. He claims they support Stelmach and reject talk they'll soon join the Wildrose. Others are the Wildrose. Others are the Wildrose. Others are the Wildrose. Others are the Wildrose.

Are the four working with Ed Stelmach, or against him?

Pollster Janet Brown, whose test projection modelling was notoriously accurate, notes three of the four (three in Calgary) would have ruled out the Tories had an election been held in late October. "They've come to the conclusion the party needs to make a brief turn to the right to win back the support," says Brown. "They also think they're in a position where they can move away from their current position."

But the fiscal four, however, can and must not be travelling is or out of Stelmach. A few feasibility study is slated to wrap up in 2011, but according to others, if the proposal is not accepted, it will be at least four years before construction can begin. ■

There's no way out of Nunavut

BY RACHEL MENDLEROW • For the 12,000 residents of Nunavut, the last region that spans the northern third of Quebec, getting out is a major undertaking. With no roads linking the 900,000 sq km territory to the rest of the province, a trip south requires a plane ride, which costs over \$2,000. But that's not all. Quebec is considering extending the provincial road network to several Nunavut communities—a move that



Residents of the Inuit region are isolated from the rest of Quebec.

would "have a dramatic impact locally," says Inuit leader Miqayuk, member of Nunavut's Inuit Village on Hudson's Bay. It will open North America as an

According to Transport Canada official Denis Blais, the province began seriously exploring building a road last May, at the behest of community leaders in Whapmaguano, the Cree village that sits on the edge of the province. If it goes ahead, Blais says the project, which would bridge the 200-km gap to the rest of the province, could cost up to \$100 million. But Nunavut residents remain skeptical. "It's not 10 years that I'm living here," says Claude De Paris, bar manager at the Inuit Village. "I don't know if I'll be here when the road opens."

While many in the region are excited about the prospect of more affordable travel and a lower cost of living—food and supplies, which are shipped by barge or plane, are reached up to 100 per cent—is a concern about drugs and alcohol. "I know it's in the community already," says Miqayuk. "But with a road, the door's going to be wide open. If the planes are shut, it's not a problem. But if the planes are open, it's a problem."

For the foreseeable future, however, cars and trucks must be travelling in or out of Nunavut. A few feasibility study is slated to wrap up in 2011, but according to others, if the proposal is not accepted, it will be at least four years before construction can begin. ■

CHÁVEZ ON THE WRPATH

Venezuela seems to be girding for battle with Colombia

BY LITERA OR SAVAGE • Fires in Barich Obama continues to consider deploying more U.S. troops in Afghanistan, another conflict involving U.S. soldiers has been transpiring in Washington's own backyard. Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez has recently exceeded his traditional (and) any way American rhetoric with talk of war with neighboring Colombia, along with U.S. ally Washington. 2006 has heated U.S. troops in part of an anti drug effort. Chávez has gone so far as to mass 15,000 soldiers on his border with Colombia, where in recent weeks there has been a spate of killings related to tensions between Venezuelan and Colombian paramilitary groups. On Nov. 8, he ordered his military to prepare for possible armed conflict. "The best way to avoid war is preparing for it," Chávez told editors on a weekly TV and radio program. Of the U.S., Chávez said, "The enemy is more threatening than ever," and warned Obama to not "make a mistake" in ordering an attack on Venezuela.

The object of Chávez's fury is an agreement signed on Oct. 30 between the conservative government in Bogotá and Washington that will increase access to seven Colombian military bases to U.S. troops, aircraft and ships assisting Colombia with its struggle against drug traffickers. The 10-year agreement does nothing to change a U.S. law that limits U.S. military personnel and contractors in Colombia to 4,000. While Alberto Fujimori's government used the agreement to bring American troops to Colombia territory, it has made neighbors nervous about American intentions, with Brazil, Bolivia and Ecuador expressing concern. Chávez has gone further, condemning the deal as a step toward launching a military offensive against Venezuela, and claiming that the bases would be used for espionage purposes against his regime.

It has been a rapid turnaround by Chávez regarding the new U.S. administration. In April, at the Summit of the Americas in Trinidad, Obama and Chávez met for the first time and exchanged handshakes and pats on the back. Chávez gave him a book about American rule in Latin America, while Obama pledged a new era of respect. But



CHÁVEZ HAS MASSIVE 15,000 TROOPS ON THE COLOMBIAN BORDER TO BE ARMED ABOUT WAR

these positive overtures have dissolved. Chávez is now calling on Obama to give up his Nobel Peace Prize. "The United States government is a champion of cynicism, and Obama should give up his prize in the name of dignity, decorum and respect," said Chávez. Of Obama's promise of "change," he declared, "It has changed! The coup in Honduras, the bases in Colombia, the U.S. Navy presence in the Caribbean. This is a threat to peace in Latin America."

It's hard to tell how seriously to take Chávez's latest bluster. After all, this is the man who called George W. Bush "the devil." Most observers agree that he is trying to rally his country against a foreign enemy in order to distract his people from major problems at home. In addition to high crime and unemployment, Venezuelans are suffering from rising shortages of electricity and water rationing, despite the country's oil, gas and coal wealth.

Chávez has taken to raising controversy in October, he argued, because he thinks the U.S. is doing something. "The coasted and I don't see anything," he said. "I guarantee it." Says Michael Shifter, vice-president of Inter American Dialogue, a think tank in Washington. "He is aware that things are not going well and he is not able to govern the country effectively, and that is reflected in his public acts of denigrating support. The Venezuelan way to divert attention and try to rally the country behind a national cause."

However, the subtext is ominous in the midst of a massive anti-building. Chávez said in September that his government has received a \$2.2-billion loan of credit from Moscow to buy 20 Russian-made T-72 tanks as well as a long-range Russian jet aircraft. Chávez said the acquisitions were in response to the U.S. threat, but the U.S. State Department said the buildup out-

LINE
OF
RESISTANCE

posed arms, Russian missiles, and the lifting were part of a "disincentive plan linked to the base agreement with the U.S."

Some at Washington warn that Chávez's posturing should not be dismissed, precisely because of the volatile situation in the border. "This is something that should be taken very seriously," says Roger Noriega, the former assistant secretary of state for western hemisphere affairs and a former U.S. ambassador to the Organization of American States. "With elements of two countries on a border, the sort of irregular forces that operate across that border—like the FARC or paramilitary forces—could draw these countries into a

conflict. Some Colombians believe that there would be a greater chance that the U.S. would respond," says Shifter. "That would be like NATO. The U.S. might not react, but there is no flag in the argument that obligates them to." Nevertheless, he predicts that with or without the agreement, "I think it is increasingly aggressive in the way the U.S. would come on Colombia's behalf. It wouldn't stand by. The U.S. would be fearful in trying to stop the hostilities."

Noriega, the former Bush administration official, doubts whether Obama would have the "courage" for a military engagement in Latin America, but the prospect of one is enough to make some already apprehensive about the U.S.-Colombian deal even more nervous. Indeed, a major problem with the agreement seems to be the way it was rolled out—with minimal explanation and warnings to neighboring nations such as Brazil to counter concerns and opposition. "There wasn't any serious motive here, but it was badly managed by both the U.S. and Colombia," says Shifter.

The Obama administration has so far reacted to Chávez's bluster by calling for international mediation to help Venezuela and Colombia resolve their border troubles. "We are very much aware of recent tensions along the Venezuela and Colombia border," said State Department spokesman J. Crowley. "I certainly don't think this is about the United States, but we certainly would encourage dialogue between Venezuela and Colombia as a peaceful resolution of the situation along their borders." Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is expected to make a trip to the region soon, with a particular interest in sharpening relations with Brazil.

So far Chávez has rejected the idea of dialogue. This week he called his Colombian counterpart Uribe a "traitor" and said there was no possibility of negotiations with the "treasonous" government in Bogotá. He added, "He will be squandered by history to be a disgraceful leader who turned his back on the people of the Yankins."

Noriega says there should be more international pressure on Chávez, and more support from U.S. allies for America's role in Colombia's war as a counter-offensive. "I think, frankly, the U.S. should stop forward—and with its neighbors, not the rest of the world—what be Canada—any country needs to recognize the U.S. has a complete relationship with Colombia and interests there," he says. Noriega adds that the Obama administration should do more to "rally attention to the threats that Chávez presents, and get some of our neighbors on the spot to take a position on these things before it's too late and punches start flying." ■



THE VENEZUELAN LEADER IS WORKING WITH RUSSIA AND IRAN TO DEVELOP A NUCLEAR PROGRAM

cooperation that neither one needs."

The U.S.-Colombian agreement, negotiated under the Bush administration and completed under Obama, allows the use of the bases for counter-paramilitary and counter-insurgency activities in Colombia. Shifter says that the deal was negotiated by Bogotá. "The Colombians are feeling nervous and they really pushed for it. The U.S. was strong," he says. The agreement does not obligate Washington to provide any military support to Colombia should Venezuela move against it, says Shifter, though Colombians like to think it will, especially given the fact that Chávez is sympathetic to the FARC, and allowing that to regroup on Venezuelan territory. (Congress files and cables reported as a raid on FARC rebels in Ecuador last year provided evidence of military and intelligence officials in the Chávez government helping the insurgents.)

"The agreement was sold that way, and I

passed all other Latin American countries, and threatened regional stability by potentially setting off an arms race in the region. Chávez has also been making Washington nervous by developing a friendly relationship with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Earlier this month, the Chávez government announced it is operating with Iran to develop nuclear energy programs, and that it is receiving help from Tehran to boost uranium reserves within its border.

Meanwhile, the situation on the Colombian border, a shadowy mine where drug smugglers and anti-FARC Marxist FARC rebels are active, has already been violent. Two Venezuelan national guard soldiers were shot near the border in early November (authorities blamed right-wing Colombian militia) and 11 people, mostly Colombians, had been killed in October, they were believed to be members of paramilitary groups, possibly killed by leftist rebels. Venezuelan vice-

PLAYING SPY GAMES

Canada was used as a gateway to the U.S. by Soviet bloc agents

BY MICHAEL PEYBRO • During the late stages of the Cold War, East German and other Soviet bloc spies developed a "big, trusted and accurate, but also very accurate" knowledge of Canadian intelligence services, according to a researcher who has mined the voluminous archives of the East German secret service, the Stasi. In an unpublished paper, Thomas Wegmann of the University of Southern Denmark and Helmut Müller-Eberhard, who works in the Stasi archives, say that East German spies also viewed Canada as an "operational spearhead"—meaning that while Canada was a valuable espionage target on its own, it was especially useful to Soviet bloc spies as a gateway to foreign agents onto the United States.

Playing such an agent was a massive operation, for which the Stasi would budget 15 years or longer. The first step would involve setting an agent in Canada. In the early days of the Cold War, it might have been possible to construct an entirely new Canadian identity for such a spy, but as Canada's ability to trace and spot false documents improved, it was more likely that a Soviet bloc agent would adopt the identity of a real Canadian who was living in Europe, often because he had fallen in love and moved to a European woman. If the real Canadian was in East Germany, known as the German Democratic Republic, his travel rights, phone and mail could be cut off so he could not blow the agent's cover by word of mouth in Canada. "The agent's goal would then be to move to the United States and marry an American. Now he has real papers," Müller-Eberhard says in an interview with *Maclean's*. "His job would then be to infiltrate the military and political sphere."

Before an agent could be given his new identity and smuggled into Canada, however, the Stasi needed to be sure he could play him off as a Canadian. One option was for the agent to play the role of a West German immigrant, who could not have been expected to know the arts and ways of Canadian society that this was a well-known man and often misanthropic in Canada. Instead, the East German Ministry for State Security sent agents to Canada to use as cover by gathering what was dubbed "cognitive materials," or information about everyday life in Canada.

Agent "Stegfried," for example, filed 69 reports between 1951 and 1959 about every-

thing from renting a house to collecting unemployment insurance. These details would form part of a potential agent's training before he was dispatched to Canada. "The person would have to act exactly like a Christian," says Müller-Eberhard. "He would have to know the language and even the dialect. We would need to know what was taught in Canadian schools. That's why an agent's education was so important."

Much of the Stasi's information on Canada didn't come from its agents or informants, in-



THE STASI archives reveal how East German spies

the country. In fact, the espionage target within the Canadian Embassy in Ottawa was used as its start-up phase when the Soviet empire began to disintegrate. But the espionage unit within the German Democratic Republic's Ministry for State Security received hundreds of espionage Canada from partner intelligence agencies, such as those of the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Poland.

The German Democratic Republic also per-

meised Canadian political and military circles through its espionage West Germany. As a member of NATO, Canada shared a lot of sensitive material with its West German ally, whose government was infiltrated by East German spies. An agent known by the code name "Rita" and "Gerd" worked in West Germany's foreign office and filed more than 70 reports on Canada during the 1950s and '60s, including what persons Canada took to NATO summit meetings, what the Chinese foreign minister spoke about during a visit to Canada, and how the Canadian government viewed Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

Canadian intelligence agencies, including the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, were a predictable focus of East German espionage efforts. While there is no evidence that its agents were able to penetrate CSIS, which was created in 1984, the German Democratic Republic learned much about Canada's intelligence agencies through agents in West Germany and from allied Soviet and Polish spies. This information included the names of suspected Canadian agents as well as reports on the "national workday" of CSIS.

The Stasi archives stretch some 180 km, and there is much more work than waiting to be exposed for the first time. Knowing where to look is a challenge. Finis Muller-Eberhard is particularly sensitive to get their hands on index cards with numerical codes that reveal the identities of East German agents and informants in Canada. These ended up in the hands of the CIA and, via the CIA, to Müller-Eberhard's partner, CSIS. With these codes, he was able to know where to dig in the Stasi archives to discover the full extent of East German espionage in Canada. There could be a much larger picture to be revealed. Müller-Eberhard says that his entire work, "in the morning, in the day, and in the evening," is to uncover "a fiction of the story."



THE DALAI LAMA's appeal is easy to understand, but why are his spiritual teachings accepted by the West without any critical analysis?

STOP THE LAMA LOVE-IN

He's adorable, yes, but just what is the Dalai Lama accomplishing?

BY ANDY LANEY • Everyone loves the Dalai Lama. Just how much was on display two weeks ago when the Tibetan religious leader paid a visit to the town of Taiwan in north-central India. Ethnic Tibetans travelled to the frontier airport from all over the subcontinent in order to venerate the 14th Dalai Lama, the 11th in a line of spiritual leaders who claim to be the living Buddha. A glimpse of the Dalai Lama is the greatest spiritual power on earth, said one participant in explaining the extraordinary adulation the Dalai Lama inspires. Here in Canada, one view is so different. When the Dalai Lama visited Vancouver, Calgary and Montreal last month, tens of thousands crowded into his streets to hear his message of universal compassion. The religious reception was being held with our decision in 2006 to grant him citizenship, the highest honour Canada bestows on foreign leaders. The Dalai Lama's other admirers include the U.S. government, which awarded him the Congressional Gold Medal,

and the Nobel Peace Prize committee. The personal feelings of Lama mean no matter to a spy. TV star Sandra Oh, who co-hosted one of his Canadian appearances, "He's a rock star! Rock star! Seriously, a rock star!"

Inside the Dalai Lama's rock star, does he live up to the hype? His spiritual teachings contain elements of logic and excellence that would not be accepted from any other religious figure. That alone goes against the grain of the Tibetan Buddhist faith, which is a spiritual religion. In addition to being a spiritual figure, the Dalai Lama is the leader of the Free Tibet movement. And when it comes to being a politician, he has been a successful one. He's been a successful one in his official residence in India but not while travelling. That's a discipline of compassion that reaches out and off depending on geography is not much of a discipline at all.

The Dalai Lama's position on some relationships is equally puzzling. "I look at the issue as two levels," he told the *Monk* in 2004. "On the one level, it's perfectly

clear that any deed done with good intention is a religious act," he said. "A religious act is a religious act, but it's not a religious act if it's not done with good intention."

But this pragmatic outlook can sometimes seem too to be illusory. Consider the teaching for which he is best known, his doctrine of universal compassion. As he has written, "non-violence applies not just to human beings, but to all sentient beings—any living thing that has a mind." That belief is why, when the Dalai Lama was crowned in a hand-raising ceremony for a monastery in Wisconsin in 1987, the organizers expected him to add a vegetarian meal to the feast they washed him. He happily agreed to eat meat and eat. "He pretty much lipped up every single plate that he had put in front of him," one tablemate later said. "He loves food, he likes good food." The Dalai Lama, it seems, is a vegetarian as his official residence in India but not while travelling. That's a discipline of compassion that reaches out and off depending on geography is not much of a discipline at all.

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INDIA: A DIVINE TURTLE

According to Hindus, Ganges can appear in the unlikely form of a turtle. In India, villagers are celebrating the arrival of a new freshwater turtle, which they say is the incarnation of Lord Venkateswara. The villagers head over the temple, a protected species in India. So far, the villagers have refused. Says *Samir Mishra*, a local priest, "We will not allow my body to be the turtle's body."

CALIFORNIA: A DIVINE TURTLE
TURTLE INCUBATOR

as people who believe. And for people who look to the Dalai Lama for guidance? "For a Buddhist, the same is an engaging and serious mission," he says. "The double-sided approach is rooted in a traditional method of exploring discrepancies between schools of Buddhism, whereby the Buddha is said to have taught different things to different people. But as with the doctrine of compassion, the Dalai Lama's teaching evolved only as he brought a sloppy observer closer. Or at least it does as the West, where he is obliged to match new readings on Buddhism. When addressing Buddhists directly, the Dalai Lama's position is less complicated—and more crudely practical."

This side of the Dalai Lama's spiritual teaching is never subject to criticism. Why? One possibility is that the Dalai Lama is not a specifically Western problem. In the 19th century the shared religious values that once permeated our civilization began a "long withdrawing roar," as Matthew Arnold put it. Any religion one adopts now is merely one possibility among many, a reality that detracts much of its explanatory value and force. An infatuation with the Dalai Lama is the Goldilocks solution for a culture that finds traditional religion too hot and atheism too cold. His exhortation marks him as apolitical, and subjecting his teachings to critical scrutiny outside the point, and even a mere chance we are going to engage his teachings seriously enough to be challenged by them. We instead want to look in his distant spiritual gaze.

The Dalai Lama's appeal is arguably doubly enhanced with the peculiar fascination the West has long exhibited for all things Tibetan. When Japanese discovered Tibet, it was a remote kingdom that had never been colonized and still seemed to retain the ancient past. It quickly became a land of fantasy. Shantoku Ino, the spiritual Tibetan resident, was first depicted in the 1931 novel *Lost Horizon* by James Hilton. In the late 1930s the Nazis saw an expedition to Tibet, hoping to find an ancient race of Aryans. After the devastation of the Second World War, European and American imaginations Tibet as "an unspoiled society." As Rudolf Steiner scholar Donald Lopez notes, these myths have a common source: In each case, "the West perceives some lack within itself and fantasizes that the answer, through its process of projection, is to be found somewhere in the East."

The process continued after China invaded Tibet in 1959, and many Tibetans were driven into exile. When the Beatles recorded *Ten Thousand Years*, John Lennon wanted his voice to sound like the Dalai Lama on the mountain top. "Remember the cuddly and so friendly Buddha in America of the 1960s? The language they spoke was modified Tibetan."

Today Tibet is embroiled in celebration singing from the Tibetan Book of Songs to action hero Steven Seagal. "The Dalai Lama gave me a spiritual blessing that would not have been given to anyone who was not special," Seagal announced in 1996. "I don't think he has given such a blessing to another white person."

Just how special Seagal is became clear in 1997 when Tibetan religious authority Pabon Rinpoche declared him to be the incarnation of a 17th-century lama. However ridiculous it may seem to imagine the star of *Jackass* and *Paul Whiplash* as a holy being, Seagal's anointment symbolizes the transformation Tibetan Buddhism undergoes as it has come in contact with new patrons and admiration for the West. Rather than something "out there," Tibetan culture is believed to have Westerners engage with it.

Unfortunately, on a political level, this influence has been highly negative. Seeing how requires understanding the differential

OUR INFATUATION WITH THE LAMA IS THE GOLDILOCKS SOLUTION FOR A CULTURE THAT FINDS RELIGION TOO HOT AND ATHEISM TOO COLD



WE'A ROCK STAR? Seagal (right) seems up the world's view of the Dalai Lama. But the leader is a transcending figure in his other job, as head of Tibet's government-in-exile.

in times resulting from the Dalai Lama's new position as adding to being the spiritual head of Tibet. In Buddhism, Nowhere is it more true than in regard to his position as leader of the Tibetan government-in-exile, and the Five Tibet movement more broadly.

Since China invaded Tibet it has engaged an campaign of ruthless repression. Its official government policy is "to end the so-called way of life" of traditional Tibetans and to force them to assimilate. Tibetans who protest are subject to show trials and torture. Opposing China's actions has rightly been characterized as a moral struggle on the scale of the moon-landing spurned or for better informed

equal. Unfortunately, the Dalai Lama is the equal of neither Nelson Mandela nor Gandhi. He is an instructor at the head of Tibet House, the Tibetan people would have been leading the struggle against. Under Under his leadership political goals have inevitably taken a back seat to spiritual ones.

A comparison to South Africa is instructive. One of the most inspiring moments in the struggle against apartheid came during the famous Rivonia trial when Nelson Mandela, faced with a possible death sentence, spoke from the prisoner's dock. He told his audience, "an old man which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die." Mandela's speech galvanized the anti-apartheid movement. The Dalai Lama's prominence means, by contrast, could make his defiance. "Tibetan action against oppression which promotes love toward all sentient beings, including especially the so-called enemies," Mandela



endured an international boycott of South African athletes. When China hosted the 2008 Olympics, the Dalai Lama was banning his regards. "I and my prayers and good wishes for the success of the event." If the Dalai Lama had led the struggle in South Africa, apartheid would still be in effect. Unsurprisingly, 50 years after the occupation, Tibet is still not free.

At times it seems that in what Western Tibetologists would acknowledge as the words of Richard Gere, a long-time advocate of Tibetan independence, "Many of us constantly remind our Tibetan friends, 'You must understand that some of us are

not and that genuine cultural commitment to our nation. If you put up arms and become like the Palestinians, you'll lose your special status."

Lama made the fact that the moral case for armed resistance in Tibet is as strong as it is in France under German occupation. There are many steps an independent movement can take until full steps of violence, massacres such as strikes or boycotts. The Dalai Lama has devoted himself to none of these, which are all in odds with losing one's identity. This approach is reinforced by his Western admirers, who are drawn to the myth of Tibet as an unspoiled society free from Tibet. Tibet has fought armies from Mongolia, Nepal and China. The overall effect of his staunch Western fan therefore has been to reward and perpetuate an approach to Tibetan independence that has no hope of ever succeeding.

To be fair, his Holiness has begun to admit armaments. "I have to accept failure, things are not improving in Tibet," he said last November, acknowledging the "death sentence" Tibet continues to live under Chinese rule. His supporters stress the continued hope, to the Tibetan cause and the anger Chinese officials express when ever the Dalai Lama receives an address with a Western leader but after a certain point, awareness has to give way to action.

Slowly, another political decision is taking form. As one young Tibetan who has spent his entire life in exile in India said in March, "We do not get anything from China. Some young people want to go to a little bit of violence—not to kill anyone but to demonstrate that China knows they will actually [surrender]." Such a year in its keeping with the position of the Tibetan Youth Congress, which stands for the total independence of Tibet even at the cost of one's life. If progress is to be made on Tibet, these approaches need to be taken seriously. But that can only happen if the Dalai Lama's role is a political leader, and not a new generation take over.

First, however, public perception of the Dalai Lama needs to change. As it stands, where people see their situation, they do so in the spirit of honoring John Lennon's call to "turn off your mind, relax, and float downstream." The outcome of this lazy attitude is to reinforce the Dalai Lama's leadership and his counterproductive efforts to free his people. The basic problem was summed up by the Dalai Lama himself when he visited, "I find no construction at all between politics and religion." So long as the Dalai Lama is regarded as a figure of both spiritual and political leadership, his efforts to make the first good happen will ensure the second never does. ■

Long-legged, and looking for friends

BY CAMERON ADRIEN/STICKE—Just inside the grounds of Warr, Illinois, for the large group of people and many white legs, were on the verge of extinction. From Seagal to Chai, the band had been overhauled, and replaced by human populations and advancing during the last century. In 1994 it was estimated that a mere 30 and named the continue.

Yet despite problems that they could not do for good, the griffin has made a remarkable comeback (in just 11 years), it is estimated that the population has quadrupled in the. Griffs for the movement is being attributed to government intervention, conservationists and locals, who are working together to protect the towering creature while also trying to live harmoniously with them.

Once, the griffins were hunted and poached for their skin, meat and even hair, but now many countries prohibit such practices and are handing out severe punishments to anyone who breaks the law. Killing a griffin is



The griffin population has quadrupled in just 11 years

griffins be captured and given to the long-standing Chinese, Griffs (Gryffons), as a gift. Griffs' nests, a delicacy made on plant stems, has also been taken off the menu in restaurants that are frequented by tourists to reduce the potential of poachers trying to ruin a profit.

Those who live near griffins are also being convinced that it's worth their while to help out. The Association to Safeguard the Griffins of Niger is handing out loans to villagers living around the western town of Niamey, who allow griffins to bring visitors through the area to look at the animals. The revenue from the tours also goes toward building wells and planting trees so griffins can continue to prosper. In the wild, griffins live as natural predators. With the human presence reduced, there is reason to believe the population could swell to even greater numbers. ■

Same-sex couples fight to adopt

BY KATHY ENGELBART—When the French French known to the public as "L'Amicale" (it first applied to adopt a child in 1994, the law required, the adoption board cited the "lack of a natural family in [a] household." This explanation opened a legal battle that pitted French courts against gay rights advocates, who saw the rejection as a statement about their ability—or, more accurately, inability—to be parents. Last week, 11 years after the case began—and one year after the European Court of Human Rights intervened



In France, gay couples are not allowed to adopt children

France for sexual discrimination—a French court overruled the 1994 verdict, ordering that it could not "legally justify the decision to reject [a] request."

It's supporters say the case is a landmark example of high-level equality, because, since 1966, France has explicitly allowed unmarried individuals to adopt. And given that the 40-year-old B is a nursery school teacher, it would be hard to claim she is an unqualified caregiver. So last week's reversal is being hailed as a landmark. "The groundbreaking ruling means governments can't use sexual orientation to keep someone from adopting a child," charged Scott Long, director of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights division program at Human Rights Watch. L'Amicale, a French newspaper, dubbed the decision "the end of bigotry."

For aches, the story is mixed. If it does apply to adopt again, she will still have to designate herself as a single parent, despite the fact that she is in a 10-year relationship. The French became French law in some cases despite the adoption. And that new decision looked good to the government and pro-life advocates on several occasions opposed the position, "and spokesman Luc Chatelet," which was that we are in favor of the adoption of children by same-sex couples."

Traditionally, one gay woman is okay, but not two. ■



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BUSINESS

LESSONS FROM THE FALL

Some investors escaped unscathed. How did they do it?

BY JASON KERRY — From the moment Derek Foster published his first investing guide in 2001, thousands of Canadians have hung on his every word. At just 34, Foster had punched out of his day job as a Bafco stock clerk and saleswriter to become Canada's self-proclaimed "youngest networth." With a net worth of about \$1 million, and time on his hands, he turned to writing. And his books, with titles like *Stop Worrying Here's How You Can* and *The Lazy Investor*, suggested the path to retirement bliss was alarmingly simple. Buy shares in leading companies that pay healthy dividends, he recommended, and hold on to them for the long haul.

Then, in February, eight months into the stock market crash that had wiped more than 40 per cent from the value of the Toronto Stock Exchange, Foster performed a maneuver about-face and sold nearly his entire portfolio of stocks and vaccine trusts. "I held on all last year, but I've been doing lots of research and I don't think we're close to the bottom yet," he told one newspaper in mid-March. "I don't see the market suddenly bottoming." He sold another very same week, and was launched into the most tumultuous mid-recession rally in a century. So what has Foster been doing to make sure he's not left behind?

If one were looking for lessons from the financial crisis, Foster's U-turn would seem to offer plenty to chew on. Like don't get welded to any particular investing style. Or if you do, don't panic when things turn rocky. Not that Foster, who just published his fourth book, *Stop Worrying Here's How You Can*, says any of that applies now. He insists he didn't get spooked by the crash, and says that buying on the bottom of the market, and then buying back in after the rebound didn't cause him any grief, or even lose him any money. "I'm not any farther ahead or behind where I would have been," he says, thanks to a safe strategy of buying put options, a crash-proof tool that lets investors bet on falling stock prices. Instead, the number one lesson



THE RETIREMENT CRISIS
PART 2 OF A SERIES

DEREK FOSTER sold stocks at the bottom of the downturn, a potentially disastrous move

Foster says he learned from the experience you need to share every investment decision he makes with the public.

For everyone else though, the lesson should be blindingly obvious: don't listen to anyone who tells you they've discovered the path to easy riches and a carefree retirement.

There are as many lessons to be gleaned from the Great Recession as there are unscathed investors. The sudden collapse of the market took almost everyone by surprise, and

spared no one. Not even investors who had the more degree. In fact, while some investors saw their life savings devastated, others managed to emerge relatively unscathed. What did the second group get right, and the first group do wrong? In the same way that economists and government officials are relying through the aid of the old financial system to figure out ways to avoid a repeat of the crash, investors can learn key lessons by looking back to help them as they face the future.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JASON KERRY

MACLEAN'S NOV. 30, 2008

17

erson one might be tempted to recognize your own reaction. "When comes to your financial future, most people don't spend the time to find out how exposed they are to a shock like this," says David Tritsar, a financial advisor in Toronto and author of *Enough Is Enough: How to Thrive After Retirement*.

FLAHERTY has launched a book *How to Thrive After Retirement* in partnership with more financial education in the ways of money.



INVESTORS LOADED THEIR PORTFOLIOS WITH EXPLOSIVES TIMED TO GO OFF AT THE FIRST SIGN OF TROUBLE

So it wasn't just pro stocks cooked up by the financial engineers on Bay Street that deep-south investors, say experts. Over the last year, Adam Matusz, editorial advisor at RCM Wealth Management in Vancouver, has seen a steady stream of clients come to him with shoddy portfolios. One thing almost all had in common was the lack of a written financial plan to give any advice to their investment, he says. Some of the wildest would have had their entire portfolio in equities, while others were even further and ploughed all their savings into bad sector like oil and gas stocks. "Investors often don't realize all the risks they're incurring," he says. "When you're heavily into one sector,

you can get creamed." And that's exactly what happened.

What's worse, some Canadian investors borrowed heavily to buy stocks, a practice known as margin investing. At the very peak of the market, in July 2008, investors owed a record \$16.3 billion in margin accounts.

Of anything else, another Gotta Depression, headlines screamed blood on the streets and warned of the complete collapse of the financial system. Large numbers of investors changed their minds and moved funds, crystallizing their losses.

But then buy low and sell high, even on the stock market, was the only way to make money. Over the last half-century, the average Canadian investor has made a profit of 7.3 per cent, compared to a six per cent loss on the S&P 500. Even more astonishing, between Dec. 31, 1998, and the end of last year, a portfolio of balanced GICs—a mix of stocks and bonds—outperformed the S&P 500 by 1.9 per cent. The S&P 500, meanwhile, lost 1.9 per cent. (If dividends are factored in, the S&P returned 5.34, a marginous gain considering all the added risk.)

As for today's low interest rates, many economists are expecting inflation will eventually force central banks to raise rates. "Interest rates are at historical lows, they can't get much lower," says Tritsar. "The stock market? Who knows, it could go higher, or lower."

It all comes back to the question of risk versus reward, a dynamic completely neglected over the last decade. The problem wasn't just that investors forgot, or even ignored, the art of risk management. The advent of complex financial instruments devised to mitigate uncertainty killed common sense, traders and investors into believing that risk was no longer a cause for worry. Yet in the end, those very investment products amplified the damage and caused a tectonic shift in the economy.

So despite what financial planners have promised, you can't have it both ways. The reality is, the safer the investment, the less money you're likely to be able to make away. And that means many Canadians will have to re-examine their retirement expectations if they want to be able to swing a right and not live another gas-squeezing crisis.

They might start by going their personal balance sheet in order. Canadians are clearly living beyond their means, and the situation, surprisingly, is getting worse. According to a report earlier this year from the Certified General Accountants Association of Canada, consumer debt reached a record of 1.6 trillion last year. Canadian households now owe \$1.4

trillion in total debt, more than twice, but also quite fearful. Over the last half-century, the interest from five-year GICs has averaged 7.3 per cent, compared to a six per cent loss on the S&P 500. Even more astonishing, between Dec. 31, 1998, and the end of last year, a portfolio of balanced GICs—a mix of stocks and bonds—outperformed the S&P 500 by 1.9 per cent. The S&P 500, meanwhile, lost 1.9 per cent. (If dividends are factored in, the S&P returned 5.34, a marginous gain considering all the added risk.)

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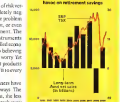
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product of financial alchemy on the part of lenders, rates are low due to the recession and the massive intervention by the Fed. Just last month, Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney warned Canadians not to overextend themselves with large mortgages bought using "exaggerated low interest rates. These mortgage rates are overvalued. The monthly payment on a \$150,000 mortgage taken out at a five-year mortgage rate would four per cent would jump from \$1,199 to nearly \$2,000 if the rate rose to just eight per cent, where they were earlier in the decade."

"People haven't learned that the difference between being financially stable and being in financial chaos is a penny rate rise," says Tritsar. "Quite frankly, the average person who hasn't managed their finances effectively would have been better off, in the long term, if our so-called recession hadn't been over so quick. Those lessons that my grandparents learned in the dark times stayed with them for life."

In the absence of learning his lessons, anyone who expects that investors and consumers need more financial education in the ways of money. Governments are beginning to step up on that front. In June, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty launched a task force on financial literacy. Earlier this month Ontario had started in 2011 it would begin teaching students in Grades 4 through 12 the basics of managing their money.

The crisis has also stirred calls for more regulation and oversight to protect investors. But to keep investors' money safe, it's not always going to help beyond one's wishes, and the type will have limited effect.

In the end, we'll come away from the financial crisis with a lesson: History isn't very comforting on that front. The line "this time it's different" has been repeated over and over again during the last year, yet the root causes of this crisis—over leveraging, leverage, leverage and ignoring risk—have played out before with disastrous consequences.

Perhaps the best lesson to take from this fall is to simply remember that sooner or later, it will happen all over again. Will you be ready? ■



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MAKING MONEY

In hard times, some towns are turning to homemade currency

BY STEPHANIE FORDLEY For the past few weeks, businesses in the tiny port town of Comox, on Vancouver Island, have been trying to survive a little bit longer when it comes to the currency that ends up on their tills. Along with loonies, toonies and colourful Canadian bills, many have been accepting something called Comoxian Way Dollars, which consist of the usual peeling of faces on the back feature a photo of money-conscious people.

These, alternative currencies in the neighbourhood of Michael Lentin, who's been busily trying to encourage businesses and shoppers to use the money to buy and sell local goods and services. After working out printing costs, Lentin says that there are now approximately 500,000 Comoxian Way Dollars circulating the valley, ensuring something akin to a big collective credit system that people can use to supplement regular dollars in these tight economic times. Local businesses donate the dollars to community organizations and charities, which in turn put them into the hands of individuals and into circulation. It cost \$4,000 (in real money) to get up and running, and Lentin's biggest worry is people using them and then not coming back to replenish their cash money, simply put. "There is money, you just have to convert."

The project might sound a little pie in the sky, but many communities have turned to homemade currencies in times of crisis as a way of maintaining the impact of tightening credit standards and local income. In operation since 1991, Ithaca HOURS, the oldest and largest local currency in the United States, is accepted by over 400 businesses and is used to pay for rent, groceries, car repairs and legal services. In Canada, there is also the Salt Spring Dollar, in Salt Spring Island, B.C. Britain has the Bristol Pound, among other local currencies that have popped up recently. Maybe the best known in the world, the Swiss Franc, was founded in 1914 in response to the 1913 stock market crash. It has grown to include over 62,000 people and turns over approximately \$1 billion annually.

These currencies are not legal. There are no laws in Canada governing the production or use of these payment instruments by individual organizations, says John Gerner, a spokes-

person with the Bank of Canada. "They're just not currency" in the legal sense of the word," she adds, though companies do collect and pay taxes on the alternative currencies. So just as Canadian Tire money can be used to repay plans for the future for purchases in Canadian Tire stores, alternative currencies aim to do the same in a town or region.

There are some big success stories attached to these made-up currencies. James Stod-



TOMKO COLLINS says Comoxian Way Dollars give her shop in Comox, B.C., a big up under Wal-Mart.

die, an economist at the Renaissance Polytechnic Institute in Connecticut, says they can be a stabilizing force in times of crisis, acting as a buffer to volatile national currencies. For example, the value of the U.S. dollar expanded when local credits were limited, and dried up when the "official" economy recovered, providing greater price flexibility. "Almost everyone would agree that doing business was one of these currencies is less desirable," says Stod-

"But when you can't get any or enough of

the primary currency, this can be a lot better than nothing. It can keep the business going, and the family fed."

Mary Joly, the founder of the Brooklyn Tiorch, an alternative currency launched in Brooklyn, N.Y., argues that it has healthy social benefits too. Tiorch, the Irish has put some much needed emphasis on fostering economic growth in the community, especially among artists and immigrant groups. She says she was surprised at how responsive business owners were to her idea.

One major difficulty in any alternative currency scheme, however, is a huge incentive to trust the system. Nonetheless, even some governments are slowly warming to the idea.

Stodder says the central bank of Brazil has a tradition to look at developing local currencies to address the country's huge regional inequalities. "The bank 'thinks it's worth studying,'" says Stodder. "And although they may not necessarily back [local currencies] explicitly with their own national currency, they are considering ways of supporting them."

Part of the attraction is that because the alternative currencies don't leave the local area, and are traded in small circles, the incentive to spend is increased and so is the flow of capital. "We've heard that these local currencies can circulate faster than national currencies," says Tom Mullart, the vice president of research at the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

The alternative currency has been paying off so far for Tomoko Collins, co-owner of the Broken Spoke Coffee House and Bicycle Centre in Comox. Collins, who opened the shop four months ago, says that using the Comoxian Way Dollar is part of a larger business strategy to connect with the community. But it also provides an added incentive for customers to choose her store over others. "We want to be competitive with other indie shops and attract customers to buy things from us as opposed to Wal-Mart," says Collins. "We've met some amazing business contacts that we probably wouldn't have met if it wasn't for the project." ■



MICROSOFT INSPIRED BY MAC, EXECUTIVE CLAIMS
Microsoft executive Simon Aldous found himself in hot water when PCW, a U.K.-based computer trade magazine, quoted him saying that Microsoft looked to the Mac for inspiration. Praising Mac's operating system as "graphical and easy to use," Aldous said PCW, "what we've tried to do with Windows 7 is create a Mac look and feel." Microsoft quickly distanced itself from Aldous' comments, saying they were "misquoting."

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ECONOMY WATCH

A WEEKLY SCORECARD ON THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY IN NORTH AMERICA AND BEYOND



JASON KIRBY

Remember "deregulating"? The idea that lurked in the U.S. wouldn't affect the rest of the world? In the history of overseas recession, stockpiles, at once just before "Where did the Great Depression end?" And "green shoots?" But after "Don't worry, everything's fine, now go back to your shopping!"

Yet after the latest data from Canada's oil-and-gas sector, one might wonder if the idea is alive and well—as in "How much have we deregulated?" Even as American policy makers will struggle with who to blame for the massive housing bubble and credit crunch, the debate in Canada is back to how much higher home prices can go. It was widely reported this week, the Canadian Real Estate Association said home resales jumped nearly 40 per cent in October from the year before. Meanwhile, the average national house price climbed to 7 per cent. That's the biggest jump since 1988, and it's only one of the market's housing statistics in Canadian history.

Not surprisingly, the news has left many people flummoxed and bellowing "bubble!" Don't homeowners know that's a recession going on outside their new cramped condos? Unemployment continues to rise, and from improving, the Canadian economy slunk another 0.1 per cent in August. Doug Porter, the chief economist at BMO Capital Markets, guffawed against the contradiction but when he noted the only other signpost of the economy to thrive as well as housing over the last six months has been bankruptcy lawyers.

As homeowners are only doing what should be expected. More mortgage rates are at record lows, thanks largely to the decision by the Bank of Canada to slash its key lending rate to 0.5 per cent and hold it there until the second half of next year. Some lenders are offering variable rate mortgages for as low as 2.99 per cent, with the average five year fixed mortgage rate offered at 5.6 per cent.

The lenders will oblige. Once rates rise, even slightly, homeowners could see their monthly payments skyrocket when a cents rise in refinancing. Thanks to Canada's governor Mark Carney, however, this risk's already warned homeowners not to take on more than their gas debt, that they can afford. Yet by keeping rates so low, don't they exactly what the central bank is encouraging Canadians to do?

So don't be surprised if the bank breaks its commitment to keep rates low well ahead of schedule. It may be the only way to tamp down the housing market with reality. ■

OVERDRAWN by Jason Logan

JUST TO CLARIFY



THE GOOD NEWS

Trimming up

Despite losses about the savings sector, Canada posted a 1.3 per cent rise in exports in September, the third time in four months that has been an increase. Statistics Canada said gains in autos, machinery and industrial goods were partially offset by weak energy exports.

Trucking along

Canada's auto isn't skydiving away from big ticket purchases such as cars and trucks. Statistics Canada said sales of new vehicles rose 1.2 per cent in September. That's

well less than last year, but the decline continues a positive trend underway since early January.



New bonds

The wave of U.S. corporate bankruptcies may have finally pointed to companies that are increasingly unable to refinance debt. Some \$150 billion in new bonds have been issued this year by firms with junk status, more than double what was issued last year.

Off the dole

The number of Americans flag for unemployment benefits fell by 12,000 during the first week of November, the lowest level since October 1999. The figures from the U.S. Labor Department have raised hopes that the tide of job losses may finally be turning.

THE BAD NEWS

Growing trade gap

The U.S. trade deficit grew to its widest point since January. Exports rose by \$18.7 billion in September, but demand for imported goods such as oil and automobiles increased as well. That's adding Canada, where exports grew but imports remained essentially flat, and therefore to slow down any U.S. economic recovery.

ers program, posted a decline in October following budget three-month surpluses since the 1970s.

Savings slump

The number of Canadians who managed to sock away retirement savings last year dropped 8.1 per cent, according to Statistics Canada. In fact, only two provinces—Saskatchewan and Newfoundland—had laborer-recorded gains in the number



Output down

U.S. industrial production, including output of automobiles, factories and utilities, rose by just a 1 per cent in October, which was less than had been forecast. The Federal Reserve said manufacturing production fell for the first time in four months. Meanwhile, the automotive sector, which had been beleaguered this year by the cash-for-clunk

ers program, posted a decline in October following budget three-month surpluses since the 1970s.

GRAPH OF THE WEEK

EASY CASH, EASY GO — It's all set up to the economic meltdown and now companies are prepared the United States with offerings of cash to just about anyone who signs up. Since the credit bubble burst, those offers have become a rare sight in American mailboxes.



SIGNS OF THE TIMES



- ▶ **Having a dinner party but can't afford the beer?** Too broke to buy a new one for that meeting? Brazil's middle class has voted the prohibition—drift. A survey found middle class consumers have turned to drinking as cheap as possible. No longer able to afford luxury items, they're making do with cheap and bottled drinks. Shopping is up 20 per cent to 45 billion.
- ▶ **Another victim of the home housing bubble is emerging—billionaire of the crucial building sector, French champagne makers are seeing sluggish demand for their high-end sparkling wines. Bouteilles de Veuve Clicquot La Grande Dame 1995 that sold for \$150 last year are 15 percent off now, with prices expected to fall further. Meanwhile, makers in Britain have had to slash prices by a third.**
- ▶ **How much are 100-E bills worth?** US\$47.7 million when they're part of a collection by Andy Warhol and sold at a Sotheby's auction for the first time since the art world has sprung back to life. bids for the classic image easily topped the US\$10 million estimate. Last Wednesday's auction of 65 items earned US\$414.4 million, more than double what was expected.
- ▶ **Sex sells, even during a recession.** Sex store proprietors say business is booming despite the downturn. Labeled as a national chain of sex stores in the U.S., one store ran 10 per cent in the first half of the year. Meanwhile, an employee at a San Francisco Good Vibras store says she's pointed out a couple in a store in home. "For the price of a movie and dinner, buy a vibrator, say hello and have fun."

LATEST INTELLIGENCE

World leaders at the G20 summit in Singapore have agreed the importance of trade, particularly with China, in fueling the global economic recovery. But pressing the wheels may be slow to roll from there as China called on the U.S. to abandon trade-linked measures and Washington pressed Beijing to relax its currency policies.

"A lot of people are concerned about a wider [U.S. China] trade war"—Jiang Zhaokang, Beijing-based trade lawyer

"Our two countries need to oppose and reject protectionism in all its manifestations"—W. Mike, president of China



"While Canada's economy was built through trans-Atlantic trade, our future prosperity will increasingly depend on the trade with the Pacific"—Prime Minister Stephen Harper

"The challenge Obama is facing is that the influence of the U.S. is rapidly waning and that he has little credibility."

—Mark Fisher, fund manager, Mark Fisher Ltd.

"China's got big issues of its own and, certainly, doesn't want to rock the currency, and it's not concerned about some protectionist ruminations from the United States"—Stephen Beach, Asia chairman, Morgan Stanley

"Economies around the world are beginning to grow again. But we cannot return to the same cycles of boom and bust"—G. President Barack Obama

THE ECONOGAUGE

Our weekly cost index of the prevailing mood among investors and consumers



THE WEEK AHEAD

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13: In Ottawa, Canada will report what state the budget for September. A rise of 1.2 per cent is expected.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23: U.S. housing home sales for October will be reported. The annualized sales are expected to rise 0.6 per cent.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24: Will Aker's GDP expand again in October? Economists forecast an increase of 0.3 per cent, a slight improvement from the 0.24 per cent drop in September.

Where will he land?

Omar Khadr may well make it back to Canada. Then what?

BY MICHAEL FREEDLANDS • The next 10-15 years will likely be at some point in the coming weeks, a blindfolded Omar Khadr will be escorted out of his jail cell, shackled at the wrists and ankles, and carried onto a military cargo plane. Though he won't have the pleasure of witnessing it with his own eyes, Guantanamo Bay Cuba-Khadr's prison for the past seven years, beginning at the tender age of 16—will disappear into the distance within a matter of minutes.

Where he will land is still a mystery. The White House announced last week that the 23-year-old is slated to face a military court-martial—somewhere on U.S. soil—for his alleged war crimes, including the murder of an American soldier in Afghanistan. Yet in the very same breath, Barack Obama's attorney general left open the possibility that Khadr, a Canadian citizen, could be tried in a federal court in Canada before a trial even begins. Pivotal, though, is the Supreme Court of Canada, which must decide, once and for all, whether Stephen Harper should be forced to withdraw the Americans to repatriate Khadr. The legal arguments are complex, but at the heart of the case is a growing sense that if the Prime Minister simply insists that his soldiers, Washington would happily oblige.

In other words, that plane leaving Guantanamo Bay straight to Canada. It's not quite that simple, of course. The Supreme Court may not issue a ruling until December, and even if it does order Harper to bring his boy and lobby for Khadr, there is no guarantee the Americans will hand him over quite so easily. But for a boy (now man) who has grown to despise Canada's bad boys, the end has never felt so close. Which means the biggest question of all—the one Harper is fighting to court to avoid—must now be answered: if Omar does return to Canada, what exactly do we do with him?

"I'm not going to argue that he hasn't served enough time, but I might argue that he's still



KHADR Rejoining his family isn't easy, his lawyer says he's welcome to live with his

a threat," says Layne Morse, a retired U.S. army sergeant who lost his right eye in the 2001 struggle that ended with Khadr's capture. "It comes down to security. Are we confident we can let this guy go and he's not going to try to use people's threatened words? That's the overwhelming question."

There is no easy answer. In 2009, Khadr still the lawyer of a senior al-Qaeda operative, a Toronto-born teenager who fled with Osama bin Laden and allegedly issued a promise that killed Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Speer, a decorated Special Forces medic. To others, he is an innocent child soldier thrust into battle by his radical dad and returned, over and over, until he confessed to a crime he didn't commit. It's no wonder the feds would rather let someone else (i.e., the Americans) figure out which label fits best.

If he is flown back to Canada, Khadr could at least theoretically face a battery of criminal charges, including high treason, "waging war" against an enemy allied with Canada, and participating in terrorist organizations (al-Qaeda). But would a jury ever convict someone who

was shot by U.S. troops at age 15, shipped to the world's most notorious prison in 16, and who was clearly under the spell of his father's extremist father? Even with a guilty verdict, it's hard to imagine his young age would warrant a sentence other than time served.

The other option—allowing Khadr to remain with his extremist family, where he is free to become a full-fledged jihadist—absolutely is equally unattractive. His mother once wished she had "the gun" to be a suicide bomber, his eldest brother-in-law accused of Qaeda gun cancer, and another brother is paroled from the west down after being shot by Palestinian troops in the streets that killed their father. The Osamas, they are not.

"Omar has been branded by the family," says Dennis Eddy, that family's long-time lawyer. "When you talk about the Khadr brand, there is no dissonance. But I have talked to Omar about not going back to his family, and Omar understands that and has agreed to that—and his family has agreed to that." (Members of the family did not respond to requests for an interview.)

Before this year, Eddy released a so-called "reintegration plan" for his client that includes religious and psychological counseling, supervision by law enforcement officials, and a home schooling program delivered by King's University College in Edmonton. "I would take him home with me, in Alberta," Eddy says. "He's just a kid who wants to be a doctor and who wants to get on with his life. I've never met a more peaceful guy."

It's a difficult description to swallow, fellow Canadians have seen the infamous video of a young Omar smiling as he wins a gold medal in wrestling at the first of countless soldiers. Stephen Xenakis, a U.S. psychiatrist who has treated Khadr over the past year, has his own opinions about whether his patient is still a threat to society. And although he would prefer to save those opinions for a possible day in court, he does offer this insight: "He is actually kind, decent, thoughtful, sensitive, young man, and he cares about people. It's really important to appreciate that he does not have any undetected mental issues at all. There is not a hard edge to him at all, and there is no sense of vengeance."

What Khadr wants, Xenakis says, is "fair justice." Even a widow and two young children crave the very same thing. ■



PLAYBOY TAKES ON 'LAWYER OF LOVE' IN COURT

There's an old tale between Playboy and Chicago's voice lawyer Coni Furman, who posed nude and penned an advice column, "Lawyer of Love." Playboy is now suing her for trying to hold him liable after her column was lifted. Furman claims she was fired for turning down an erotic's advances. It'll be the first time she's sued a U.S. sexually explicit magazine over alleged copyright infringement. It read: "Lily's short, Get a Girlfriend."

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What's wrong with consensual prostitution?

It's a criminal act. It shouldn't be legalized.

WHAT CANADIANS REALLY BELIEVE

From the death penalty to same-sex relationships, a new poll shows huge shifts

BY KEE MACQUEEN • An Ontario court judge will soon decide if Canada's prostitution laws should be struck down. In British Columbia, the Supreme Court will decide if laws prohibiting polygamy can still be enforced. And in the House of Commons, a private member's bill would make it legal for the profoundly ill to seek a doctor's help to commit suicide. As a nation we are reexamining, refining or redefining our morality in dramatic fashion. In some instances we are asking the courts to do our thinking for us. But in most cases we argue a national sense of right or wrong in the millions of individual judgments calls us to make every day—increasingly without the

guidance of organized religion.

With its many stark issues at stake, a recent Angus Reid Strategic poll took a national survey last month along Canadians to consider 15 ethical issues. Their answers—on issues as diverse as animal rights, prostitution, homosexuality and illegal drug use—show stark profound divisions by gender and region. But taken together, they seem to reveal a rather astounding liberal tilt in our morality, albeit with some exceptions. Each Canadian sits by his and most certainly her moral compass, and the wonder is we don't bump into each other more often.

Consider these six sticky moral situations (which are the most and the least agreeable to you, and to most Canadians):

- 1) You plan to have an abortion.
- 2) You want a civil suit.
- 3) You favour killing convicted murderers.
- 4) You think the dying have the right to end our lives with a doctor's help.

5) You don't care if the drugs you buy have been tested on animals.

6) You support medical research using the stem cells of human embryos.

Let's start by saying there's never been a better time to be a Canadian think, era, seal, or a lab rat. Canadians today are more likely to entertain about the treatment of animals than about the lives of our fellow humans. Just 23 per cent oppose euthanasia, but 41 per cent condemn medical testing on animals, the survey found. Abortion is considered morally wrong by 23 per cent of Canadians, fewer than the 31 per cent who have moral qualms about wearing fur. But while four in 10 oppose animal testing, only 17 per cent take issue with researchers using human embryonic stem cells. As for capital punishment, 51 per cent of Canadians consider it "morally acceptable," a jump of six percentage points since Reid last asked the question in 2007.

As a nation, none of our most arduous today would be shocking to earlier generations. Gay marriages, sex between unmarried men and women and having babies outside of marriage are "morally acceptable" to most thirds or more of respondents. But that's where it stops. Just 15 per cent condone marital infidelity. And pedophilia is universally condemned. Just one per cent considers sexual relations with minors to be "morally acceptable." Moral views are fluid, but the public has said, "this is where I draw the line," Maria Cannon, vice-president of public affairs for the polling group, says of infidelity and pedophilia.

Where and how the line gets drawn is something also up for grabs. "Morality is actually very complicated and it's a matter of where it comes from and what we hang onto, and how we change," says Kerry Bowman, a bioethicist at the University of Toronto's Joint Centre for Bioethics, a clinical ethicist at Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto who deals frequently with end-of-life care, and a core services officer who has worked with great ease and change for 20 years. Bowman says ethical choices are shaped to an extent by complex responses to the issues of the day, but that a person's ethical core goes far deeper, to an evolved instinct that produces religion and even business themselves. "Contraceptive religion, the great religions of the world, are really only a few thousand years old and they really would not exist if they weren't playing into something that already existed," says Bowman.

Still, it wasn't stretch more than a generation ago when the answer to life's Big Questions was handed to us. They came from our families, our good books and religious leaders, and from our monochromatic and like-minded circles of friends. Today, church attendance for most denominations has plunged, but across the surface an ascent to per cent of Canadians identify as Christians, says Andrew Grenville, chief research officer for Angus Reid Strategic polls. "Even though we're reformed, there is still a lot of religious faith out there. We're believers, but not belonging." And not necessarily believing. The great acceptance of abortion and euthanasia in Québec, despite the opposition of the Catholic Church, which dominated the province's religion and social life for centuries.

We're asked today to work out our moral answers from a more worldly point of view. Or, more cynically perhaps, we find a morality that justifies our lifestyle. What an increasingly diverse nation, drawn from the full spectrum of races, religions and cultures. It's no longer a one-offling waving a night horned grimoire while the white robes of seeing the same people at work, at church,

at the same clubs and at bowling on Thursdays, says Grenville. Today sociologists talk of "network individualism," where daily life takes people into a variety of social groupings. "The more you're exposed to people of different beliefs and different ways of being, the more you realize, you know, they're not really crazy," says Grenville. "It's not weird. It's not bad. It's not a threat to us." And so, views change. Sometimes dramatically.

ANIMAL VS. HUMAN LIFE

Abortion is morally acceptable to 66 per cent of Canadians, an increase from 61 per cent in two years. It is one of a remarkably few areas where men and women agree in similar proportion. Support for the death penalty has jumped an point in two years to 53 per cent. The result is that most people (61 per cent) consider it morally wrong to conduct medical tests on animals that are demanding 54 per cent who oppose capital punishment. (The remaining 13 per cent are undecided on the death penalty.)

Reconciling these two views is a lot of a challenge, considers Grenville, who says the poll signals a slight trend sensitivity to animal life. "Everybody lived on a farm, or knew farmers, it might be quite different," he says. To him, the poll's greatest surprise was the widening divide in favour of the death penalty. "To see it in the majority is really striking, particularly when we see other things becoming more permanent or morally acceptable," he says. "For them to become more acceptable to kill someone so pernicious, that's a real shift to a conserving civil and, to me, a disturbing one."

Maura McQuay, a University of Toronto theology professor and associate director of the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute, says the poll shows a higher level of respect for animals than for lives of human life. "It just seems to me we've got some thing a little bit out of proportion. I'm obviously displaying my world there," she says. McQuay, a practicing Catholic, says at light of the support for animal life, it's "pernicious" that animals don't extend to abortion, human embryonic stem cell

research, euthanasia and capital punishment, which all have majority support. "It's always strange that there is so little regard, it seems to me, for human life at different nodes of the spectrum."

The shift from viewing animals as merely property is one of the greatest changes in Western morality, says Bowman. "Animals toward non-human life, and I include both

SEAL HUNT protest at the Canadian Embassy in Washington



Good times for animals: 31% of us have qualms about wearing fur. 53% say capital punishment's okay.

the environment and animals as that, is in rapid transition," he says. "When animals are shown the public reaction is the same as if they're wrong," he says. "Where you people aren't leaving up to help other people. It's very complex and strange stuff."

Perhaps it's a case of finally listening to our instincts and according our first teachers the respect they deserve. Bowman considers it a comfort to believe that morality is what separates humans from the rest of the animal kingdom. "Morality produces human consciousness because you can see it in our primitive heritage," he says. "Because moral nature is our own human presence." Bowman—who is also president of the Canadian Group for Abolition—points to many studies and recorded observations of primates exhibiting such altruistic acts as compensating for the disabilities of fellow primates or even rescuing humans. Steven Pinker, a Harvard neuro-

THE GENDER DIVIDE

Only a fool would based an opinion as to which gender is more ethical, but it seems the sexes live on different moral planes. Women are far more likely than men to believe it is morally wrong to wear fur, clone animals or humans, provide, consent, adultery, use

ONE ETHICIST was accurate for euthanasia will increase



Only 22% of Canadians oppose euthanasia, while 41% condemn medical testing on animals

animals for medical tests, or conduct embryonic, polygamy, pornography, prostitution a illegal drug use. As for the view from Mars, men are more likely than women to oppose abortion, contraception and having a baby as a of veddy—those following a relaxed, if somewhat contradictory theme. (In fairness, the number of males in opposition is small: 16 per cent of men oppose having children outside of marriage, for instance, compared to 13 per cent of women.)

The pollist Curcio says women are more attracted to the rule of being "objectified and sometimes exploited" and as a result are less likely to accept issues like porn, polygamy, infidelity and prostitution where there is a perceived power imbalance.

RIGHTING WRONGS & VICE VERSA

In an era where condoms are advertised on television and radio, the inclusion of contraception as a moral question in this poll seems an anachronism. Just five per cent of men and six per cent of women felt birth control control wrong. Yet not that long ago, drugs that had condoms behind the counter, and contraception was a sin that shamed, provoked and leads to promiscuity—an older example of evolving morality.

Harvard's Packer often writes about the shifting moralization and "moral matrix" of issues. Smoking went from a social activity with a personal health risk to a moral issue of second-hand smoke. Food became an ethical minefield, "with critics rehashing about the use of antibiotics, the chemical way of fat, the freedom of chickens, the price of oil-free beans, the source of fish and now the distance the food has travelled from farm to plate." Menstruation landed issues like diaphragms, condoms, and emergency contraception have largely shaken off the beach of immorality.

As for contraception, it's made a comeback from sin to safe. A recent report by the London School of Economics, titled "Fewer Emitters, Lower Emissions, Less Cost," concludes that money invested in family planning not only helps women in the Third World, but every unborn child lessens the eventual production of greenhouse gases.

Perhaps Canadians, with our low birth rates, already know that. We're a pragmatic bunch—as moral as possible, under the circumstances. ■

Angus Reid Strategic conducted online interviews with a representative sample of 1,000 Canadian adults on Oct. 7 and Oct. 8, 2009. The margin of error for the complete sample is ± 1 per cent.

DITCHING THE PILL FOR GOOD

New health concerns have women looking for different choices

BY KATE LAMBA • Teresa Lambert was 35 years old when she first went on the pill. Her family doctor, she says, talked up its benefits. "It was my skin would be clear, and I'd know when my periods were coming." At the time, it seemed "great," she says, but 10 years later, she's feeling differently. The 46-year-old recently went off the pill, and says a lot of her friends are doing the same. "I didn't want to be taking something that altered my body any more," says the Calgary nurse, whose own concerns are real.

Lambert isn't alone. While the pill remains one of the most widely used methods of birth control in Canada—only the condom is more popular—a growing number of women are feeling ambivalent about it, or ditching it altogether. In fact, oral contraceptive prescriptions in Canada levitated off in 2008, reports pharmaceutical industry analyst IMS Health Canada. Health care workers are seeing a growing demand for non-hormonal methods. Spurred by concerns about their health, the environment, or even frustration with family doctors, who sometimes seem to push the pill as a road one day care-it, Canadian women are looking for other options.

In this age of organic produce and yoga studios on every block, it's no surprise that a growing number of women don't want to take hormones every day. Yet a square of recent tension left some, Lambert included, doubly concerned. In April, U.S. researchers announced that birth control pills seem to impair muscle growth in 75 healthy women aged 18 to 31, those who weren't taking oral contraceptive pills gained 60 per cent more muscle mass than those on the pill. Birth control pills typically contain a mix of estrogen and progestin, the "young money hormone," says Bruce Bredman of Texas A&M University, one of the study's authors, the results could be due to the fact

MAC HOLIDAY.

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CHINA: WOMEN COMPETE FOR PRINCE CHARMINGS

In a country where the rich kids are getting richer, women are lining up for a golden ticket. More than 70,000 would-be Cinderellas have applied for just 40 spots at a fairy-tale ball in China, where multi-millionaires will cough up \$5,670 for the opportunity to sweep them off their feet. But for women, it's mostly what's on the outside that counts as well as intellect, applicants will be screened on looks and physique.



that, "when you're pregnant, you're not building muscle, because you need to reserve resources for the fetus."

To prevent pregnancy, the pill suppresses ovulation, which is why Emma Lind, 25, avoids it. "I consider ovulation to be my most powerful tool," says the Ottawa resident, who uses condoms. "My skin clears up, I've got lots of energy, and I'm physically present." Before that fertile phase, a woman's estrogen and testosterone levels peak, causing a spike in libido, says the University of British Columbia's Dr. Jonathan Prior, senior director of the Centre for Menstrual Cycle and Ovulation Research. In women who take the pill,

usually produced by our bodies, are passed through human urine, ending up in the sewage treatment plant," says Victor Treloar, a biologist at the University of Ottawa. Treloar's work has shown that, when these estrogen find their way into the ecosystem, they can turn male frogs into female, a result that Lind declares "scary."

How to explain the pill's lasting popularity? For one thing, it's effective, about 98 per cent, if used correctly. In spite of the wide range of birth control options available to Canadian women, from the contraceptive ring to the patch, women stick to the condom and the pill, notes a recent

you can't don't hear about," says Treloar's nemesis Kelly van der Meulen, 32. Meanwhile, "you go into a university workshop, and every second is for the birth control pill."

As women look for other options, the contraceptive device is making a comeback: the Mirena IUD, for one, releases small amounts of hormones directly into the uterus, levels that Black says are almost undetectable in the bloodstream. But several women told Maclean's that, when they approached their family doctor about being fitted for one, they had to be referred to another doctor. "Not all doctors are comfortable putting them in," Black agrees. "Sometimes there's an error they don't tell them with the pill."

Of course, that's not the only reason the pill is popular. It offers benefits beyond pregnancy prevention, she adds, lowering the risk of endometrial and ovarian cancer. (Some studies have suggested an increased risk of breast or cervical cancer, she notes, but more research is needed.) It's often prescribed to treat everything from menstrual cramps and acne to hormonal acne (acne that comes

Not all women, though, are happy to take hormones to treat what they see as perfectly natural conditions. Stephanie Belek, a 25-year-old Calgary-based writer, was prescribed the pill at the age of 13 to help her heavy periods, looking back, she wonders if it was necessary. "I won't really use my cycle, or how it felt," she says. She's not taking the pill anymore.

The pill does have some side effects, Black notes, but most of them—like headaches, nausea and bloating—are temporary, a "menstrual," and will soon go away. Indeed, millions of women take the pill today to control cramps. Prior agrees that most doctors would advise women to "take the pill and not worry about it," but she takes a slightly different view. "There's an emotional identity attached to achieving your own menstrual cycle, and being able to control your body," she says. "When you're on the pill, it's the doctor who's controlling your cycle. You don't own it."

Since going off the pill, Lambert's been watching her own body change. "I always had really clear skin, and now my skin's breaking out," she says. "It's not awesome being 26 and having acne, and trying to figure out your periods." Even so, she says, "I'm glad I'm doing it."

DARK CHOCOLATE A STRESS CURE?

Instead of doing yoga or meditation to relax, why not just eat some chocolate? According to new research, it might not be such a bad idea: consuming about an ounce and a half of dark chocolate every day for two weeks can lower the levels of stress hormones in people who are feeling particularly anxious, researchers found. It's good news for stressed chocolate-lovers, who can now proudly claim that their favourite snack is helping them de-stress, too.



DIABETES IN OUR MIDST New Challenges, New Discoveries

We are in the midst of a global health crisis.

An estimated 285 million individuals now live with diabetes worldwide, with the figure expected to approach 430 million by 2030 if the current trend continues unchecked. While diabetes ranks as the fourth or fifth leading cause of death in most high-income countries, we now know that low- and middle-income countries bear the greatest burden of disease.

Complications from diabetes, such as heart

disease, stroke, amputations, renal failure and blindness, lead to disability, reduced life expectancy and enormous health costs for virtually every society, making diabetes one of the most challenging health problems in the 21st century.

Previously, approximately about 70,000 children under age 15 developed type 1 diabetes (in which the body's insulin production shuts down progressively) worldwide, with the figure rising by about 2 percent each year. Similarly, type 2 diabetes in children and adolescents — in previous generations — was a passing condition throughout the world.

Closer to home, the reality is no less daunting: by 2010, the Canadian Diabetes Association estimates that more than 3 million Canadians will be living with diabetes, and a further 1.6 million living with prediabetes. As a result, 1 in 4 Canadians will be af-

ected by diabetes. Among First Nations peoples living in British Columbia, the prevalence of diabetes appears to be increasing at a still greater rate.

In an effort to stem the tide, the World Health Organization has developed a seven-year action plan for addressing the diabetes epidemic at the global and national levels. Earlier this year, the United Nations called for urgent action to implement the plan. There's clearly no time to lose.

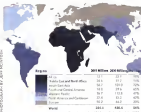
THE TIPPING POINT

It's no secret that obesity increases the risk for type 2 diabetes. In 2003, researchers at the University of British Columbia (UBC) shed new light on the biochemical behind

DOUBLE WHAMMY: DIABETES AND DEPRESSION

Diabetes is a life-threatening disease, with much of the burden of care falling on the patient, so it stands to reason that the disease would affect mental health. Systems of depression, which more frequently in people with diabetes, along to the level of major depression in 15 percent of cases. The combination of diabetes and depressive pain people at increased risk of reduced work productivity, disability, diabetes complications, and even death.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF MCINTOSH



"I DON'T want to take something that altered my body," says 28-year-old Teresa Lambert.

hormone levels stay relatively flat.

It isn't just a woman's anxiety that might be affected by the pill, experts speculate: it could even impact their taste in men. In a recent paper, University of the West of England researchers concluded that women on the pill don't show the same preference for more "masculine" features—like dominant behaviour, or competitiveness—that ovulating women do. What's more, they're less likely to choose partners who are genetically dissimilar from themselves. (When genetically similar couples have children, it can cause health problems for the baby.) Though the reasons aren't fully understood, it seems that men respond to a woman's cycles, too. Prior cites a warning study in lay doctors which found that, right before ovulation, they got the most tips.

For Lind, the environmental aspect is also a factor in her choice of birth control. Synthetic estrogens from the pill, as well as those nat-

urally produced by our bodies, are passed through human urine, ending up in the sewage treatment plant," says Victor Treloar, a biologist at the University of Ottawa.

That's partly due to a lack of familiarity with other contraceptive health care workers are often "more comfortable talking about it," says Dr. Amanda Black, an assistant professor at the University of Ottawa and lead author of the study, and lack the time to talk to patients through several other options. Even so, many women increasingly lack patience with this. "I've noticed how many over-the-counter devices there are out there that



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the link. It appears that high levels of fat in the blood reduce the levels of C-peptide (CPE), a protein found in the insulin-producing beta cells of the pancreas. Deprived of CPE, the beta cells slow down their insulin production, leading to type 2 diabetes. Armed with this knowledge, "researchers could conceivably design a drug to prevent the breakdown of

CPE in obese individuals," says Dr. James Johnson, Canadian Diabetes Association scholar, assistant professor and head of the UBC research team.

At the University of Alberta, pharmacology professor Dr. Peter Light and his colleagues have identified and characterized common genetic variations that, when combined with an unhealthy diet and lifestyle

can lead certain individuals to "tip into" full-blown diabetes. "There are two particular genetic variants that are found in 20 percent of people with type 2 diabetes, but only 10 percent of those without the disease," Dr. Light explains. Genetic screening "could allow us to identify people at risk and give them targeted nutritional and lifestyle advice," he says.



FEATURED CONGRESS PRESENTATION: EVIDENCE FOR EXERCISE RINGS LOUD AND CLEAR

The research leaves no doubt that exercise helps people with diabetes control their disease

though doctors recognize that people have great trouble changing their behaviour. In a presentation at the World Diabetes Congress, Dr. Ron Sigal, a senior health scholar of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research (AH-FMR), shone the spotlight on an 11-year study of the association between

fitness levels in more than 1,000 men with type 2 diabetes. Compared to the fittest subjects, those with the lowest fitness levels had five times the risk of dying over the course of the study compared to those in the highest fitness category. The study's stark conclusion: low fitness strongly predicts death in this population.

Dr. Sigal also discussed his own research in the presentation. In a study published in 2007, Dr. Sigal's research team compared the effects of aerobic training, resistance training, a combination of both, and no exercise at all, on blood glucose levels in people with type 2 diabetes. After six months, the aerobic exercisers saw their hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) levels—a measure of long-term blood glucose control—fall by a respectable 0.5 percent, while the resistance training group achieved a drop of 0.36 percent. The big surprise in

the group that combined aerobic with resistance training, HbA1c fell by a full 1 percent—a highly significant amount.

What the study shows, says Dr. Sigal,

is that "while each type of exercise reduces blood glucose levels on its own, combining them brings the levels down substantially further." Even individuals with a slightly weight need to keep fitness in mind, he adds. In terms of staving off heart disease, "fat and fit is healthier than thin and unfit."

The Canadian Diabetes Association 2008 Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Prevention and Management of Diabetes in Canada are consistent with Dr. Sigal's findings.

• People with diabetes should accumulate a minimum of 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous aerobic exercise each week (at least three sessions per week, no more than two days between sessions).

• People with diabetes should be encouraged to perform resistance exercise three times per week in addition to aerobic exercise.

Montreal hosts 20th World Diabetes Congress

Every four years, the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) hosts the 20th World Diabetes Congress in Montreal. This year's congress, held in Quebec, is the largest of its kind in the world. The congress is a platform for the exchange of information and ideas among diabetes researchers and clinicians from around the world. The congress is also a place where people living with diabetes can meet and share their experiences. The congress is a place where people can learn about the latest research and treatments for diabetes. The congress is a place where people can meet and share their experiences. The congress is a place where people can learn about the latest research and treatments for diabetes. The congress is a place where people can meet and share their experiences.

This just in

New results from the ADVANCE (Action to Control Diabetes Vascular Events) trial, presented at the 2008 World Diabetes Congress, show that intensive treatment of blood sugar levels can significantly reduce the risk of heart disease in people with type 2 diabetes. The study found that people who kept their blood sugar levels below 7 percent (HbA1c) had a 12 percent lower risk of heart disease compared to those who kept their blood sugar levels between 7 and 8 percent. The study also found that intensive treatment of blood sugar levels can significantly reduce the risk of stroke in people with type 2 diabetes. The study found that people who kept their blood sugar levels below 7 percent (HbA1c) had a 12 percent lower risk of stroke compared to those who kept their blood sugar levels between 7 and 8 percent. The study also found that intensive treatment of blood sugar levels can significantly reduce the risk of heart disease in people with type 2 diabetes. The study found that people who kept their blood sugar levels below 7 percent (HbA1c) had a 12 percent lower risk of heart disease compared to those who kept their blood sugar levels between 7 and 8 percent.

ON THE MARKET, ON THE CUSP: NEW DRUGS FOR DIABETES

As a general rule, drugs are recommended for people with type 2 diabetes who have not reached blood glucose targets after two or three months of lifestyle changes. Most patients start off with the drug metformin; adding other agents as needed. Even with all the drugs on the market, only half of people with type 2 diabetes achieve their target blood glucose levels.

The recent introduction of a brand new drug class called incretin agents represents a leap forward in type 2 diabetes treatment. When we eat, our bodies naturally secrete hormones called incretins (known as the "incretin" effect), which in turn leads to a rise in insulin secretion. People with type 2 diabetes produce and secrete incretins in lower

amounts than their healthy counterparts, so incretin agents compensate for this sluggish response. Unlike many other antidiabetic drugs, incretin agents don't pack on the pounds, and some agents may even promote weight loss. Another bonus: the risk that incretin agents will cause blood glucose to drop to unhealthy levels is negligible. At the time of writing, the only incretin drug approved in Canada is a oral tablet, though other agents have entered the market in the U.S. and elsewhere.

People with type 1 diabetes can also take heart: a new drug called telitumumab, which prevents the immune system from destroying the insulin-producing beta cells in the pancreas, is well into the testing stage. If the drug works as expected, people with type 1 diabetes may require less insulin to control their blood glucose. Also in the pipeline is a drug called rubiteumab—the first agent designed to treat eye damage caused by diabetes.

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

Diabetes prevention begins

with assessment of risk. "We've identified obesity as by far the greatest modifiable risk factor [for type 2 diabetes]," says Dr. Stephen LaHaye, medical director of the Vascular Disease Pre-

vention and Research Center for Southwestern Ontario. "If your doctor doesn't take the initiative, you can request to have screening tests to establish your risk level. If the tests place you at high risk, a blood glucose test can detect not only diabetes but impaired glucose tolerance (IGT)—a metabolic

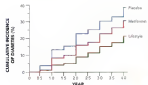
disturbance that substantially increases the risk of getting type 2 diabetes in the future. At this [prediabetes] stage, changing your lifestyle—more specifically, achieving a healthy weight and exercising regularly

When lifestyle changes don't produce the desired metabolic changes—or prove too taxing to sustain—the drug marketplace may have some preventive tools particular in younger, more obese individuals. If you're contemplating the drug route, however, bear in mind that "when it comes to diabetes prevention, lifestyle takes you further than drugs," says Dr. LaHaye, whose research interests include the influence of diet on the development of diabetes and heart disease. The Diabetes Prevention Program, a large trial that compared lifestyle changes to metformin as preventive strategies, brought home this point in a dramatic way: over the course of the study, which followed more than 3,000 people

at high risk of diabetes, a lifestyle modification regimen reduced the incidence of diabetes by 58 percent, while metformin reduced it by a significantly more modest 31 percent.

Kids and Pumps

Insulin pumps deliver a steady trickle of fast-acting insulin to the body and, at the push of a button, a customizable dose of insulin before eating. The convenient feature of insulin pumps: serious diabetics, particularly athletes and adolescents. While conventional pumps still require people to test their blood glucose at regular intervals, the US medical technology company Medtronic Inc. has equipped an insulin pump with personal continuous glucose monitoring (PCGM), known as the Guardian Personal. Medtronic's new system has taken care of the testing: in a recent study of 148 children with type 1 diabetes, this PCGM pump provided better blood glucose control and caused fewer episodes of low blood glucose than a conventional pump—not to mention a significant boost in convenience.



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Important risk factors for type 2 diabetes

Weight	European descent: males >94 cm, females >88 cm Asian descent: males >90 cm, females >85 cm Other origins: follow European cut-offs until further advice
Fasting triglycerides	>1.7 mmol/L, or specific treatment for this lipid abnormality
Reduced HDL cholesterol	<1.03 mmol/L in males <1.29 mmol/L in females or specific treatment for this lipid abnormality
Raised blood pressure	Systolic pressure >130 mmHg and/or Diastolic pressure >85 mmHg or treatment of previously diagnosed hypertension on
Family history	First degree relative with diabetes
Pre-existing cardiovascular disease	Isthemic heart disease, cardiovascular disease periparturient disease

Adapted from International Diabetes Federation 'high risk approach' webpage



Mark World Diabetes Day by celebrating Canadian Diabetes Champions

World Diabetes Day is particularly special to Canadians, as it marks the birthday of Dr. Frederick Banting, who, along with Dr. Charles Best, co-discovered insulin in 1921, forever changing the lives of people with diabetes around the world.

Together, the Canadian Diabetes Association, Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and Freedom from Insulin Canada are marking the day by honoring and celebrating Diabetes Champions.

Champions are people living with diabetes, their friends and family, diabetes researchers, healthcare providers, educators, diabetes educators, advocates, life science partners, community leaders, role models, mentors, and elected officials. To become just a few.

Visit www.kraftcanada.ca and tell us why you are a Diabetes Champion. Share your personal story or recognize someone today!

MEMBERSHIPS

- Global story on p. 9: **Free Diabetes Risk 2009** www.diabetesforlife.org/offerings/di2009
- Personal story on p. 7: **memphis.com** www.memphis.com **2009 Diabetes Champion**
- **Diabetes Prevention Program** <http://www.kraftcanada.ca/diabetesprevention>
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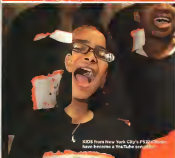
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Red Wings
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Singing with glee

Kids' choirs—and not just the fake one on TV—are suddenly centre stage BY JOHN INTINI

music



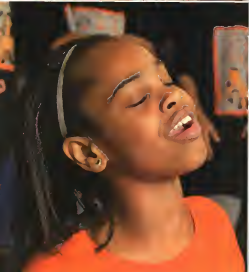
As well as being a member of the choir backing up Dead Man's Bones in *Unsub* last month, June Aggerman was picked to perform a solo, a cover of Cher's *Strong Enough* (My Baby Just Sex Me Down). Fully aware of who the public house had paid to see—the band is a throwaway Academy Award-nominee score from *Concussion*—Aggerman wasn't expecting much more than a polite response. Like at an elementary school concert, she says, when “the crowd dips because it’s mandatory.” But come in with aplomb following her four minutes alone in the spotlight. And the *Georgie Brown*’s received the same, while *georgie brown*’s received the same. In a moment at North Vancouver’s *Georgie Brown*’s secondary school with having “turned on the night’s most killer performance.”

Being upstaged by a kid from the choir is something Aggerman has been earning himself up for this fall. On the band’s first fall debut, which came out last month, Dead Man’s Bones is joined by the Silverlake Conservatory of Music’s children’s choir. And at every near stop, the band selected a local choir, pointed the members’ faces like ghosts, and took them on stage as backup. When asked by a journalist what they hoped to achieve by including the kids, Aggerman offered a ruminating, but poignant response: “You know when you’re a kid and you get crayons and paper and just draw what was you want and it’s just a bunch of messy lines, but to you it makes sense, and then they put it on the fridge? From that point on, you’re always trying to get back on the fridge. We wanted to get back to that place before we were trying to make the fridge. We wanted to work with people who hadn’t been affected in that way yet.”

The gaps in Dead Man’s Bones aren’t the only ones trying to capture a belated magic. As it, perhaps, from Whynot Goldberg’s turn in *Sister Act*, choir have never been more centre stage in pop culture than they are right now. The soundtrack for *Where the Wild Things Are* features Karen O’s voice. A Gentle 5 choir at New York City’s PS22 regularly captures the YouTube generator’s attention (13 million views and counting) with covers of modern-day pop songs, and *Chloe*, an award-winning BBC reality show about a character who tries to raise misperceptions, and when rehearsal, students on to song, has proved incredibly popular in the U.K. (TV) is doing all three episodes of season one on Jan. 1). And then, of course, there’s *Glee*. *Glee*’s massive hit, about a high school cheerleader, has 6.6 million views in one week. And the show’s chart-topping, music-industry covers of Journey’s *Don’t Stop Believin’* and Beyoncé’s *Halo*—the latter more than 2.6 million downloads on iTunes—has the risk of being trafficked in a locker for saying, a choir, an, well, cool.

Over the years it’s been common for big name rock stars—the Rolling Stones (No One’s Gonna Get What You Want), Pink Floyd (Another Brick in the Wall) and R.E.M. (Just Kidding)—to borrow the voices of youth. The gimmick was making children’s choruses with the “voice” of rock ‘n’ roll. “Putting a new voice, a tone of naivety into, in the mouth of children has been done a lot,” says Lewis Christy, a Hoboken, N.J.-based jockey and music historian. And many of the choirs were used because they were classically trained.

These days, perfect pitch isn’t necessarily the top priority when a band seeks the voices of a kids’ choir for hire. In many cases, the less polished the technique, the better. Aggerman, for instance, wasn’t looking for a classical choir like at all. “We had to make it sound like we had been done for a million years to our record went very scratchy,” says Matthew Tait, a 14-year-old at the Elizabeth School of the Arts, and a member of the choir.



KIDS from New York City’s PS22 choir have become a YouTube sensation

WILLIAM LARSEN

that backed Gossling's band in Toronto's Opera House last month. Gossling didn't want to just stand there with our hands by our sides as we danced on stage. While arriving for an equally authentic sound, where the Wild Things Are dancer Spike Jones, in a footlock slip of the recording session, was not that a music teacher in over-earnings-up the kids.



when he plays in a suit but called the Clangs, says it's not as easy to produce authentically. "It's one thing recording in a school gym," says Finger, 61. "It's quite another dragging kids into a music studio and saying, 'Okay, be spontaneous.'"

When last night, however, it was be down-right moving. On their last album, the Doors enlisted Emmy Kala Chak, made up of children as young as three, to sing with them on their song *Savior*. When the kids, members of the music program organized by the Montreal City Mission and St. James United Church, joined the indie rockers on stage during a show last January, Natalia Yanchuk, the band's keyboardist, had a tough time keeping it together. "They sound imperfect, but that's what makes it so beautiful and touching," says Yanchuk.

THEY SOUND IMPERFECT, BUT THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT SO BEAUTIFUL



THEY SOUND IMPERFECT, BUT THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT SO BEAUTIFUL

The final is more in tune with the Langley Music Project's *Reverence* CD. Despite the growthy 1976-77 recording of more than 160 children singing their hearts out in a school gymnasium in B.C.'s Fraser Valley, Chasid still remembers getting "tingled" the first time he heard the tracks—including covers of David Byrne's *Spiral* and the Eagles' *Hotel California*—which were captured on a one-track tape in one take by music teacher Hans Finger. "The imperfections were beside the point," says Chasid, who had been one of some of the last Langley recordings by a listener of his program who had found them on a disk case. "Like things that have a certain security to it, where someone from the heart rather than coming from technique. There was something about those recordings that tugged at the heartstrings."

The band headed on the pop-culture ride in 2001 after Chasid, a self-described "hard-core" environmentalist, found a label willing to produce it. And since its release, *Reverence* CD has earned critical acclaim. It's been acknowledged that Langley brought something back to his music. "In hindsight, without the overtones that you're merely exploring kids, that if they don't get the notes right, if the rhythm is a little off, it's okay," says Chasid. Spike Jones shared the album with Keren O during the making of the Wild Things soundtrack in the hopes of inspiring a similar result.

Finger, now retired and living in Chasid,

see it disappear for a while. Otherwise, it'll sound like we're listening to *Sevens* from records on the radio all the time."

One thing that isn't showing any signs of going away is the *Reverence* CD. It's about nearly twice as long as the other two, and it's a mix of old and new songs. The album's success is also a product of the *Reverence* CD's timing, one that now seems as happy to listen to an unknown singer making a classic pop song their own as they are hearing the original. And, despite all the backslapping, high school drama, *Reverence* is one of the biggest hits of TV. That goes a long way with such events during these tough economic times. There's also the notion that this wasn't in a more innocent sound—be it real or fake—as a reaction to the frequent sound of modern music. Call it a sweet rebellion.

Whether the *Reverence* CD has been embraced, however, it's tough to quantify. Following last month's gig with David Byrne's *Reverence*, a whole bunch of football players didn't give the choice or anything like that," says Agnew. That said, playing alongside a Hollywood band like *Reverence* has earned her and her

show states plenty of old-timey music. As for the general feeling around them these days, Finger says there is a risk that the sound of their last two perfect singing voices may itself become commercialized. "Soon you're going to get professionally trained children's choirs to sound like the children's choirs that are not professionally trained," laughs Finger. "Or a Canadian kid choir concert." ■



NORAH JONES... HAS SOMETHING TO SAY

I know you'll never bring me flowers / Flowers they will only die / And though we'll never be a flower together / I know you'll never know me say / You never know / You don't even talk / And I like the way you let me lead you when we go outside and walk / And you really let / My only man of the hour / From her new album *The Fall*, Norah Jones' song *Plan of the Year*, about her pet dog, who also appears on the album cover.

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WHEN NICOLAS CAGE (right) sees Werner Herzog behind the camera, he knows he's got to be the "wilder brother," says the veteran director

Nutty actor meets ideal director

Werner Herzog lets Nicolas Cage off the leash as a crack-addict cop in 'Bad Lieutenant'

BY BRIAN D. JOHNSON • On the set of *Bad Lieutenant* in New Orleans, director Werner Herzog was allowed to say Nicolas Cage smearing what looked like cocaine. In the movie, inspired by Abel Ferrara's cult classic, *Cage* plays the heavy *Bad* side as a drug-addicted cop. It was only the second day of shooting, and Cage was trying to get into character. "He walks from a vat of what you'd see," Herzog recalled during a recent interview, "and the moment it's up to him and say, 'Nicolas, what is that you smearing?'" As the actor explained in a separate interview, "I couldn't answer the question because I would have looked at the prop I'd been doing. I had this little vial of something really bright. I would smear that and try to pretend I was getting high so I could play the scene. So I said Werner, 'It's not.' Just to not break that."

This is what happens when the maddest Hollywood star this side of Joaquin Phoenix teams forces with a European director who has a reputation for being a madman. Let's recap his techniques. Insanity has been good to Nicolas Cage. He's done his sweet work playing obsessed, manic and deranged individuals—the mad men in *Memento* and *Wild at Heart*, the delirious alcoholic in *Leaving Las Vegas*, the deranged man sometimes in *Adaptation*. But Cage has also learned to compromise his trademark intensity into one hack role after another, with psychopomp performances as *Braveheart* O'Neil, *Iron Giant* as *Iron Giant* and *Madagascar*. Then again, the man has some crazy bills to pay (his US\$6.6 million in unpaid taxes, he was his two New Orleans mansion auctioned off last week for foreclosure) and his Michael Jackson-like extravagance is legendary. Cage's purchases over the years include two castles, a dozen mansions, two yachts, a jet, some 50 cars (including a half-million-dollar Lamborghini), a jet airplane, two African long colobus—and a director who'll let him booze for US\$376,000, outfitting Leonardo DiCaprio.

Herzog is notorious for a different kind of nuts. When shooting *Fitzcarraldo* (1983)—starring Klaus Kinski as an obsessed colonist who built an opera house in the Peruvian jungle—the director risked life and limb to lead a 350-tonne working man-of-war on a small mountain in the Amazon. And in making *Rescue Dawn* (2006), the "method" director shed 15 lb to share solidarity with his star, Christian Bale, who lost 65 lb to play an emaciated prisoner of war. As a director who likes to shoot drama with documentary realism, now Herzog thought his star was smearing real cocaine on the set of *Bad Lieutenant*. After all, Cage famously ate and cooked himself for his role in *Vampires Suck* (2005).

But the 45-year-old actor insists he was totally sober on the set, and drew on his experiences with drugs 20 years ago. "I was shocked Werner didn't know the process by which a film actor smears the cocaine," he says. "I was an important performance, so that I had to look at the bridge of something that happened so long ago and try to

recall what that might have been. Werner was saying, 'Let's do the film of evil.' But I wasn't trying to glorify drugs in any way. I wanted to show the effect they had, the risks and facial expressions. They can really control the face." And the vice. As Cage's character gets more drug-addicted, his voice gets increasingly pitched, until he starts to sound like Jerry Seinfeld on heroin.

Let off the leash in this daring cinematic race, Cage delivers one of his wildest performances in ages, as a homicide cop with a lucky crack pipe who hallucinates guinea while trying to solve a mass murder. In Herzog and his eager scriptwriter, a director licensed with men who lose their marbles, jungle roller toughest. "Sometimes I would wedge him to the brink," says Herzog. "But I didn't have to push him. When he was one near to the camera, he knows he can go to the other limit. He can turn the pig loose."

Although *Bad Lieutenant* was touted as a remake, it's a different script. And while Cage isn't as nutty as Kinski, he has some great gonzo moments—like when he smashes an oxygen tube into a wealthy mother in a wheelchair, sniffs a 44 Magnum in her face, and says, "You're the meanest bitch country's going down the drain." But compared to the protagonist of Herzog's next film, he's a patsy. *My Son, My Son, What Have I Done* is the true story of an actor in a Greek tragedy who becomes consumed by his role and his mother. Now that's method acting. **M**



WE'RE STALKING... ROSIE O'DONNELL Turns out, being happy about Rose and her partner, Kellie Compton, who seemed to be on the outs. Rose stayed near the cops, until last week. She suddenly announced on her radio show that Kellie moved out of their house—two years ago. Could Angelina Jolie be to blame? The candidate told Howard Stern that, pre-Britt, Angus passed Rosie her phone number, but nothing came of it. "I have dreams about her a lot still," she says.

GETTY IMAGES; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ADAM COLEMAN

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INFORMATION SUPPLEMENT

SAMSUNG LED
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Through the looking glass

Get the skinny on new features and recommended models | MARK SHUTTMAN

With technology evolving at such a rapid pace, buying a new TV can be an intimidating proposition.

After all, no one wants to invest in a high-definition television that'll be outdated by the time you take it home and plug it into the wall.

Complicating matters is all the confusing jargon thrown around, be it 1080p, 1080i, HD-M4, K75C, 1400-Hz and Blu-ray HD. You probably—and justifiably—feel like you need a degree in electrical engineering just to understand it all.

A high-definition television is capable of displaying up to 1,920 vertical pixels by 1,080 horizontal pixels on its widescreen display (of ten reduced to an 16:9 format). This translates to a lot more detail and clarity than the older "standard definition" televisions, which have fewer pixels (and with screens shaped more like a square).

Oh, and if you see "1080p" advertised, this simply means all 1,080 lines of resolution are

shown "progressively" or drawn in sequential order (1, 2, 3, etc.) as opposed to the older ("interlaced") method of alternating between even and odd lines to compose the image (1, 3, 5, etc.). This results in a smoother, richer picture—if connected to a 1080p source, such as a Blu-ray Disc player.

Most new HDTVs today are 1080p televisions, but there are other features to consider, too. The following is a brief look at four trends.

LED backlighting

Until recently there was a discernable advantage for plasma over LCD TVs when it came to contrast ratios—the difference between the brightest whites and the blackest blacks displayed by the television—but this gap has been bridged considerably with something called LED backlighting. When LCD-enhanced technology places light-emitting diodes behind the liquid crystals, resulting in high-brightness, deeper blacks and more vivid colours. They're also more energy efficient and thinner than conventional LCDs.



SONY BRAVIA
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PDR

Samsung's ultra-thin Series B HDTV's (\$3,999.99 for 46-inch model, starting at) use LED backlights to produce exceptional picture quality including deep blacks and a wider colour gamut compared to LCD TVs. The 240Hz televisions can also be connected to the Internet for on-demand video and info (see below).

PHILIPS LCD VIERA Z SERIES



240Hz

The popular LCD TV-based technology helps reduce motion blur. While 120Hz ("120 hertz") technology has been all the buzz over the past two years – as it essentially doubles the 60 frames per second speed at which frames are displayed – newer TVs can quadruple the 60 frames per second video source. Not everyone is sold on 120Hz/240Hz technologies, however, so it's best to see a few yourself at the store before you buy one.

SHARP AQUOS SERIES



Sony's new XBR10 Series line (\$3,999.99 for 46-inch model, sonystyle.ca) is a 240Hz television (featuring Sony's MotionFlow™) plus it features many other bells and whistles, including an edge-LED backlight design, built-in Ethernet for Internet connectivity and ships with a wireless HDTV box to remove the clutter from around the television.

Wireless HD

Some televisions today, including the **Sony XBR10 Series** and **Philips Viera Z-Series**, include a wireless transmitter box that beams 1080p quality video to the user by television, resulting in a less-cluttered television setup. Simply attach all your components to the box – such as a digital cable or satellite box, Blu-ray player or video game console – and you'll see the picture appear on the television screen elsewhere in the room.

The **Philips Viera ZC-P5621** (\$6,999.99 for 54-inch model, philips.com/ca) is the company's flagship Z-Series HDTV. This gorgeous, one-inch-thick plasma television includes a wireless transmitter, wireless receiver and starter box. It also offers on-demand Internet content.

Widgets

Finally, many of today's top televisions now feature an offer: Ethernet jacks on the back of these premium HDTVs for high-speed Internet connectivity. TV viewers then use the remote to select "widgets" which are graphical icons on the screen that play content such as YouTube videos and Flickr photo galleries.

Range in size from 32 to 52 inches (\$1,299.99 to \$3,299.99, shipped), the **Sharp AQUOS LE700 Series** televisions are LED-backlit for high brightness, colour purity and impressive contrast levels. The models include AquaNet, which gives viewers access to online info, including NAVTEQ traffic reports, Weathering forecasts, NASDAQ stock quotes, and more.



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A CANDLELIGHT VIGIL is held in front of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 11, 2001, in memory of those who were killed in the Sept. 11 attacks.

Major Nidal Hasan had an enabler

**All those red flags but no one did anything.
Political correctness took the lives of 14 people.**



DEAF STUDY

"Bayer would have us believe that words, however hateful, should be given free rein. History has shown us that hateful words can sometimes lead to harmful actions that undermine freedom and have led to unspeakable crimes. That is why Canada and many other democracies have enacted legislation to place reasonable limits on the expression of hatred."

"Tribal woods" can lead to "unacceptable crimes." The problem with this line is that it's historical nonsense, as I've pointed out. It's not a conspiracy. I did last month, during my testimony in the House of Commons justice committee, when an opposition MP raised on whether it wouldn't have been better to consider the publication of *Mein Kampf*.

"That makes sounds as if it ought to be right," I replied. "But the problem with it is that the Weimer Republic—Germany for the 13 years before the Nazi party came to power—had its own version of Section 11 and original laws. It was very much as kind of prairie Canada in its hate speech laws. The Nazi party had two prosecutions brought against it for anti-Semitic speech. At one point the state of Bavaria issued an order banning Hitler from giving public speeches."¹⁰

And a lot of good it all did.

But will the old refrain echo through the corridors of power: vigorous honesty that speech will lead to mass murder unless we

collected at the "recreationable forests" (

Actually, an exposure to that contaminated and regulated cancer polluter by politically correct uniform leads to slaughter. The next being apocalyptic here, in Communist London, a bloody anti-miscellaneous war is already happening, just a couple of weeks back. This time men and women plus an unborn baby were gassed down at Fort Hood by a major in the U.S. Army. Nobel Blum was the perpetrator, his political correctness has enabled everything of the war in the days that followed that near paradoxically showed revelations piled up like a grotesque scene, but a new panel of court in the Toronto Blogger Scenarios website created the proper distillation.

Major H. ...
been m...

Major life events couldn't have been more straightforward about his life and what he was. Among psychiatrists, he put "S&M" in a "Soldier of Allah"—conversion phase at Aethe Unaffiliated Services University of Health Sciences, he was recommended for staying to persuade patients to convert to Islam and telling people subjected to his constant "anti-American propaganda," but, in the Associated Press reported, "a lack of appearing discriminatory against a Muslim student kept efforts from taking a formal written complaint."

As the writer Barry Rubin pointed out, Mayor Hagan was the first man in modern U.S. history to give a PowerPoint presentation outlining the rationale for the crime he was about to commit. And he gave the presentation to a powerful fellow army officer.

stress and factors. Some of whom glared openly at their colleagues, but none of whom actually spoke up. And, when the question of whether then-Captain Hazen was, in fact, "psycho," the policy committee at Walter Reed Army Medical Center worried "We would be like if we took out one of the few Muslim students."

This is your brain on political correctness. Seated here got promoted to major and shipped to Fort Hood. And barely had he got to Texas when he started making wild claims praising the jihadist murderer of two soldiers outside a recruitment center in Little Rock. "This is what Muslims should do, stand up to the aggressors," Major Hassan told his superior officer, Colonel Terry Lee. "People should strap bombs on themselves and go into Times Square."

Major Hasan couldn't have been more straightforward about who and what he was

In less enlightened times, Colonel Lee would have concluded that, being in favor of the murder of our comrades, Meyer was objectively on the side of the enemy. But instead he firmly cautioned the major against saying things that might give people the wrong impression. Which is to say, the right

This is your brain on political correctness.
"You need to lock it up, major," advised the colonel.

But, of course, he didn't. He could pretty much say what he wanted—unfettered should have their throats cut, for example. Meanwhile, the only ones who felt any "need to lock it up" were his fellow psychiatrists, his parents, his teachers at the Uniformed Services University, officials at Walter Reed, and

the brass at Fort Hood, so they looked it up for them. And sure 14 months ago, dead.

And even when the slaughter had stopped, much of the result found itself to transfer both the US Embassy and the central population there to confront the evidence. The Federal Security Service's Juan Stagno was professed to be most worried about an "anti-Machado conspiracy" (over the lawsuit) dragging him into the case as the farthest risk of attempting to hold in check. This was the Jacarilla. Lynch argues the priority was always to suppress ideological dissent. To happen, no matter how many times we see that, there was no anti-Machado rebellion after 5,000 corpses on Sept. 15, or after Fidel Machado or Llanero. Machado has certainly been re-understood in New York and London but by the neo-conservatives of 9/11 and 7/7 rather than by any "ultra-rightists".

As for the military, well, obviously, they're a bunch of Bush-scarred psychos who could snap at any moment. *Newsweek* called the mass murder "A Symposium of a Military on the Brink." "A psychiatrist who was sent to deploy to Iraq at the end of the month, Hauer reportedly opened fire and the Fort Hood address changed," wrote Andrew Ross. "It comes at a time when the stress of combat has afflicted so many soldiers individually that it makes it increasingly difficult for the military

as a while to deploy for years ahead." No mention of the words "Islamic" or "Muslim," but Mr. Ilari was inclined "to get at the root cause of violence systems." As in past, traumatic stress disorder. Opposite word "pain," you get it when you're lost in combat. Major Hasan had never been in combat. Until Nov. 5, PTSD was something you get when you returned from battle overseas and misread and misinterpreted, nightmares, or, in extreme circumstances, suicide. After Nov. 5, PTSD was apparently spread by talking back and ranting (opinion) and by misreading things back and forth.

This is your brain on political correctness.

Unsurprisingly, as the more spiritual aspects of Islam to the Fatah founder and those of the 9/11 terrorists and an assassin at random, he's been drawn from Britain, a land with the widest all-but boundless tolerance for racial and ethnic diversity. In his latest novel, he adopts the *Pashan* dress of those Arabs who are proud to differentiate to show up with Occident and especially the sheer acquiescence of such reverence to render the PASH dress as it should and even a Frank Rich of the *New York Times* willing to make incidentally on whether the owner's piece of *ghedra* suit or not, even "ignored because of political correctness, bureaucratic dysfunction, sheer incompetence or some blend of the real." My initial, but I'm impressed it made the list.

On, with U.S. military personnel, still insufficiently appealing victims, consider the three sisters and an "aunt" drowned in their car in the Radeau Canal in Wageningen in what a remarkably uncorroborated media reported as a midnight driving lesson gone wrong. And even when their parents were arrested, there was little appetite to discuss "humour killing." When 16-year-old Aqua Purves was charged, allegedly by her father with her brother's help, for refusing to wear a hijab, Ciqay was a lone voice out on call.

This is your brain on political correctness: a dead Rat, not as dead as poor Anna Marie, and the overwhelming ranks of Western "hate our killing" soldiers.

Groups such as the Council on American-Soviet Relations (with its Potemkin membership but lack of foreign funding) want a world where Islam is beyond discussion where "red flags" are ignored because to do anything about them would risk career-damning accusations of "Islamophobia," or six months of "extremist" training, or a complaint to the "human rights" commission where Jean-Pierre Lysich's uniform will sport you into a decade's worth of the PC state. The Communist Party, much like the neo-

MACLEAN'S
BESTSELLERS
LIST BY DEAN BETHUNE

Discussion

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| 1 | THE BRIDGE'S MAN | By Larsen, Mobydys | 98 (9) |
| 2 | THE GOLDEN BEAN | By Rindler-Syler | 9 (9) |
| 3 | TOO MUCH HAPPINESS | By Alice Hume | 2 (9) |
| 4 | LAST NIGHT IN TWISTED RIVER | By John Irving | 3 (9) |
| 5 | THE GIRL WHO PLAYED WITH FIRE | By Jojo Lewis | 6 (9) |
| 6 | THE MUSEUM OF INNOCENCE | By Deborah Fink | 8 (9) |
| 7 | THE LACUNA | By Barbara Kingsolver | 7 (9) |
| 8 | THE LOST SHIP | By David Brown | 1 (9) |
| 9 | THE YEAR OF THE DOOR | By Margaret Atwood | 4 (9) |
| 10 | GALILEO | | 5 (9) |

New Edition

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by John Updike | 1981 |
| 2 | WHAT THE DOG SAW
by Malcolm Cowley | 1982 |
| 3 | THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH
by Richard Brautigan | 3715 |
| 4 | A SOLIDER PULSE
by Rick Heller | 1981 |
| 6 | QUEEN ELIZABETH THE QUEEN MOTHER
by William Somerset Maugham | 4121 |
| 6 | D-DAY
by Anthony Browne | 13 |
| 7 | THE CASE FOR GAO
by Karen Armstrong | 5191 |
| 8 | SUPERFREAKNOVICES
by Susan Lewis and Jonathan Lasker | 8120 |
| 9 | TRUE COMPASS
by Elizabeth Waddell | 7104 |
| 10 | THE CELLO SWATES
by Eric Salton | 81059 |

LAST REVIEW (GROSS) ON LIST

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free men," because they are the first and least
wrestling line of defence in a free society.

Instead, asked "Who ya gonna believe, the Colorado Diversity Handbook or your [sic] eyes?", more and more of us go along for the former, if only for a quiet life. Co-moderator Lynch has it exactly backwards: it's the women's submission to political correctness, the willingness to leave your marble with the Diversity Café tea-drink girl, the leads co-deeds—real deeds, without corporate T-shirts in Ontario. And when the guy on the table flings wildy and screams "Albino ahhhh!", the PC enforcers won't be there.



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SCOTT FITCHUK

There's a theory that the economy is bogged down in two wars and that Jan. 6 and 9/11 are the same. (Because nothing makes you see more rational than TRYING LIKE THIS.)

IN THE MIND OF THE CONSPIRACY theorist, every government decision is a desperate move to avert a crisis. In the mind of the conspiracy theorist, every government decision is a desperate move to avert a crisis.

one's theory that the "moon landing" was filmed on the Bay of Whities' backside is an Internet phenomenon and a knowledge of CAPS LOCK. (Because nothing makes you see more rational than TRYING LIKE THIS.)

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A building can't be blown up, a prominent figure can't be gunned down and a Marxist can't be awarded an Oscar without a networked army of Americans blaming the shadowy hand of sinister forces behind their sight and own perception. The shadowy hand of sinister forces behind their sight and own perception.

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ON THE WEB: To read Fitchuk on the Internet, visit his blog scottfitchuk.ca/scottfitchuk

JOSEPH PIERRE ADÉLARD LAMBERT

1939-2009

A lifelong Liberal, he only faced two opponents during more than 20 years as a popular town councillor

Joseph Pierre Adélaard Lambert was born in Joliette, Que., on Nov. 21, 1939, to Antoine Lambert, a tailor, and Yvonne Perrin, a secretary. Known as Pierre, he worked throughout his high school years, at one point as the promissaire at Centre Weiss, Joliette's movie theatre. He liked movies but liked busy even more. Struck by the young man's work ethic, Roger Cloutier, who ran the local beer's co-op, taught him the rudiments of running a business. Soon, Pierre was the co-op's accountant.

He met Luc Lefebvre at a base ball game in 1961. Baseball is dear to Pierre, but he noticed Luc's green eyes, brown hair and (soon enough) her remarkable calm in the face of his bluster, they married in September 1962 and had three children together: Martine, François and Émilie.

Pierre left the co-op in 1970 and opened his own accounting firm. He was also president of the local chapter of Quebec's conservation association. This, his children joke, was a matter of convenience, their father could hardly become a councillor in the town (it also allowed a gas station, yet could) barely pump his own gas (the occasion was politics, and Pierre was a passionate enough partisan to wear old glasses, ties and shorts underneath his allegiance to the Liberal brand. "If you dressed a squirrel in my suit probably would have found for him," Martine says).

He became an organizer for both the provincial and federal Liberals. His meetings made him a real lion in Joliette. Being imprisoned federally by the Conservatives and the Bloc Québécois afterwards, it was also the home riding of long-time Progressive member Guy Chevrette. Pierre spent years trying to lead a Liberal who could attract him, always in vain. During the 1980 referendum he worked for the No campaign, convincing Maritimes to pass over business at his high school. He was to continue at the victory that he took his daughter's name in front of him as the other party (the cause to regret that, Martine smiles to this day). His own political involvement was dampened by Luc, who was unwilling to let her husband go Ontario or Quebec City for a large part of the year. The stress, the suit, would kill them both. Being a municipal councillor was an honorable compromise. Luc would keep her busy, while Pierre could still keep the living tradition of watching the Montreal Expos with his kids. He was a casual fan in Pierre-Dan-

Don Pléneau, a neighbouring village to Joliette where the family lived, by accident in 1987. In 1992 he easily defeated his first opponent, he would only be challenged once more in his political career.

No one was ever too flustered to Pierre. Those who weren't put off by his folioist sympathies (or his free! Pleasure appearance and (sarcasm) were often shocked by his uncommon readiness. He gave Alexandre Carrière, who lived in an apartment block Pierre owned and in which Pierre's sons Lucien and his propensity to stay busy, his first job. He then helped him find work in Joliette once he graduated. "You are the most important person in my life," Alex would write later to him.

Luc succeeded to become a councillor in 2004, and Pierre lost his life's anchor and council. He stopped coming at home, after favouring cancer-cancer (stroke) — or worse — for his health. "My father was the only person I knew who could sit at a table as a dignitary," says his son François. In Joliette, he often held court at La Belle Rivière, the local restaurant, where owner would call him whenever chopped wood was on the menu. He walked golf and drove around in his Cadillac with Shogun, his 110 lb. Boxer, happy but unhealthily. In 2007 he suffered a stroke, he decided to leave his home and move to a nursing home. He passed away on Nov. 21, 2009, at the age of 69.

he'd lay off the Jol. Louis takes and try sugarless Coke. Earlier this year, Pierre learned that Jean Guy Pélletier, a former police officer, would run against him in the November elections. It was a tight race — voters were unhappy with the pace and quality of road work in town — and Pierre campaigned with even more energy than usual. His losses hurt, he was tired at the time and, as he found out on the night of the election, the results were very close. At 50.35, François called Pierre and found him to be a nervous wreck. Minutes later, though, the good news. Pierre had won by 30 votes. Overjoyed, he drove to the community centre, where he thanked his well-wishers and volunteers. To the assembled journalist he acknowledged the close work and said he would work for all citizens. He then suffered a heart attack and collapsed. His one could revive the freshly an elected member for Martin Thériault. Dan Pléneau. He was 69.

BY MARTIN PATRICK

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this law to deny related employees EI benefits. Yet you can still get paying EI on family members without raising an assessment and penalty.

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And we make it easy! In order to see how, we can give you an EI Refund and exemption so you never have to pay EI for as long as you work for or employ your family. We handle all of the paperwork and details involved to ensure everything is done properly the first time. Over

the past 18 years, Grants International has helped 19,000 Canadians get EI Refunds worth over \$40,000,000. Many clients have received refunds of over \$10,000!

If EI is being deducted from family members who are not eligible, they and the company are entitled to a refund and exemption. Contact us now for your FREE EI Refund Package and we'll help you clarify your situation and get you the maximum refund possible. Best of all, if you don't get a refund there's no charge!

Our Guarantee to You...
"If You Don't Save, You Don't Pay!"



GRANTS INTERNATIONAL INC.
EI REFUND EXPERTS
Helping Canadians get EI refunds for over 18 years





TIGER WOODS

OFFICIAL PARTNER

I first swung a golf club when I was nine months old. In 2001, I became the first golfer to hold all four professional major championships at the same time. Since 1996, my Foundation has inspired more than 10 million youth. I believe that anything is possible. Together with TAG Heuer, I'm helping young people believe in themselves. To get involved please visit www.tigerwoodsfoundation.org.



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